Chronicles

May 2001

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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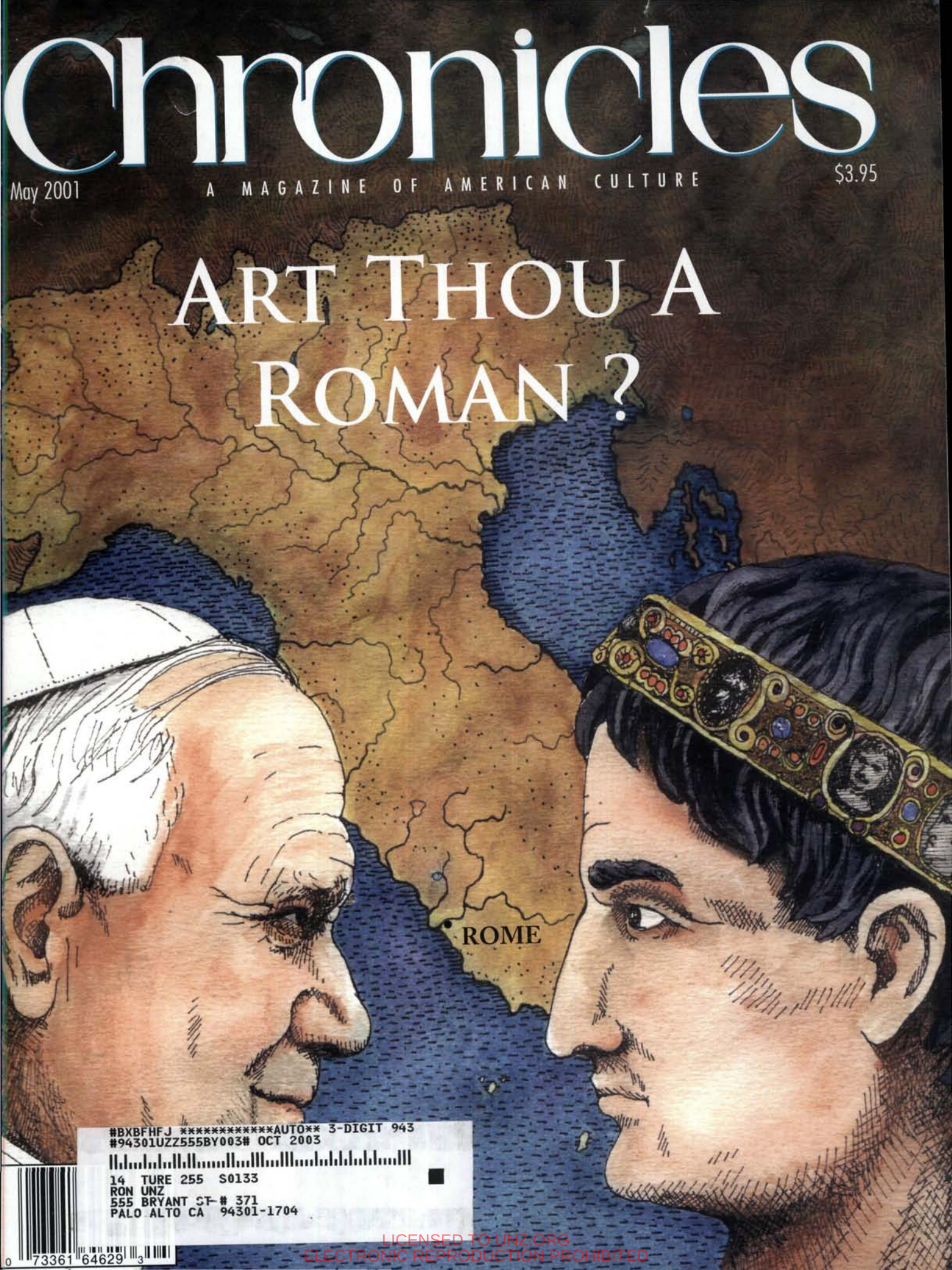

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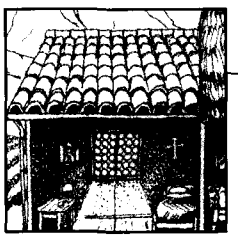

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EDITOR
Thomas Fleming

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Scott P. Richert

SENIOR EDITOR, BOOKS
Chilton Williamson, Jr.

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Aaron D. Wolf

ART DIRECTOR
H. Ward Sterett

DESIGNER
Melanie Anderson

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Katherine Dalton, Samuel Francis, George Garrett, Paul Gottfried, Philip Jenkins, J.O. Tate, Michael Washburn, Clyde Wilson

CORRESPONDING EDITORS
Janet Scott Barlow, Bill Kauffman, Donald Livingston, William Mills, William Murchison, Andrei Navrozov, Jacob Neusner

FILM EDITOR
George McCartney

FOREIGN-AFFAIRS EDITOR
Srdja Trifkovic

LEGAL-AFFAIRS EDITOR
Stephen B. Presser

RELIGION EDITOR
Harold O.J. Brown

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Cindy Link

PUBLISHER
The Rockford Institute

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On George W. Bush

William Murchison's take on President George W. Bush (*Cultural Revolutions*, February) reminded me of a cartoon called "Jim's Journal" that I used to see in one of the student newspapers at the University of Wisconsin. This simplistic drawing, complete with stick-figure characters, centered around Jim and his daily life. For every event, whether mundane or extraordinary, he would reply with the word "okay." "I went to the store today and it was okay," or "I went on a walk and it was okay," or "I spent five-and-a-half years in college and it was okay." That was the gag.

Thus, Mr. Murchison's Bush, as governor of Texas, was "okay." As president, he'll be "okay," too, and when his four or eight years are all over and done with, America will be "okay." Not being a Texan, nor having lived in Texas when Bush was governor or knowing him either informally or personally as Mr. Murchison does, I will respectfully defer judgment on these points. And Mr. Murchison is right when he says that we will not see a Lani Guinier enforcing civil-rights laws, a Lawrence Tribe on the Supreme Court, or a veto of a partial-birth abortion ban in a Bush administration. But we could have gotten this from a Pat Buchanan, Howie Phillips, or Harry Browne administration as well, or the administration of most of the other Republicans who were running for president last year. That Bush is the one in the White House and not one of these others says a lot about the current state of the Republican Party.

Besides those things Mr. Murchison mentioned in his piece, there are many other initiatives we won't see in a Bush administration. We won't see a reduction in government agencies or a rolling back of regulations, a repeal of NAFTA or GATT, any limitations on immigration, or the return of our troops from the far-flung posts of the empire.

In fact, in just the first couple of weeks of the new government, we saw appointed as labor secretary a person who knowingly broke the law by harboring illegal aliens and then lied to the FBI about it; watched the current expansion of government into education continue unabated with the administration's education proposals; and witnessed the creation of a brand-new government bureaucracy, run by Democrats, to dispense taxpayer funds to religious charities and organizations. You don't have to be an atheist or a member of the ACLU to see the inherent danger of extending the tentacles of government into the private and spiritual realm. In fact, the next time you receive the collection plate at church, the money you give may very well go to pay the high-priced lobbyist that the church has sent to Washington to get more funding from the federal government for its soup kitchen, provided it meets OSHA and EPA standards after a thorough inspection. (Gee, weren't both of those agencies bequeathed to us by Richard Nixon?)

All of this signals the return of the GOP to a Western European/Canadian Tory conservatism, commonplace in the administrations of Eisenhower/Nixon/Bush *père*. Republican officeholders don't talk about this change because they're too busy taxing, spending, and distributing enough boodle to stay in power. But the political record shows that such Toryism caused the destruction of the Progressive Conservatives in Canada, the wreckage of the Conservatives in Britain, the defeat of conservative opposition parties in Europe, and the near-collapse of the GOP after Watergate. Whether that will happen to the current GOP is unclear. But the track record is not promising.

Perhaps in my sixth decade, I will agree that getting the best you can is "okay." But at a youthful 28, I would like to believe that there is something better out there for myself, my future family, and my homeland than just "okay."

—*Sean Scallon*
East Ellsworth, WI

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On Finding a Refuge

Chronicles is by far the best political/cultural journal in America today and, unfortunately, the only consistent voice of traditional, rooted conservatism. Your unapologetic defense of Christianity and Western civilization offers some hope that both might enjoy a rebirth before it is too late.

I am a refugee from the "mainstream" conservative press. I had known about *Chronicles* for some time but did not subscribe until a couple of years ago. I wish I had done it much sooner. The quality of writing is excellent. The views expressed are well thought out, although I do not always agree with everything I read: I think national missile defense is a good idea, the Cold War was mostly worth fighting (despite its very real costs), and the South was not wholly blameless in the Civil War.

On most other points, I heartily agree with you. Mass immigration is national suicide and harmful to immigrants as well. Free-trade agreements such as NAFTA are simultaneously destroying America's industrial base and strengthening Leviathan. Over the past ten years, the foreign policy of the United States has been perverse. Our intervention in the Balkans was unjust and stupid, and our continued brutal embargo of Iraq is likewise immoral. In short, the Cold War is over and, as you have said, it is time for America to come home. The culture of the entire West is decadent, with rampant abortion and every sort of deviancy exalted. And the monstrous federal welfare/regulatory/police apparatus needs to be dismantled—not in order to benefit Wall Street manipulators and the Fortune 500 but to free American families to live independently.

You have even changed my mind about Abraham Lincoln, who I now consider a tyrant who dragged this country though an unnecessary and bloody war that went a long way toward destroying state sovereignty and creating the all-powerful government we now suffer under.

I am certainly not a wealthy subscriber, but I have some extra money, and I am happy to make a contribution to this indispensable journal. My only regret is that, ten years ago (when I was in college), I decided to go into a business career rather than pursue my true interests. If I had done what I should have done, I'd be writing essays for *Chronicles* instead of long, rambling letters to the editor.

—Anthony J. Wawrzynski
Westlake, OH

On Suffrage

I so thoroughly enjoy *Chronicles* and the various writers that you feature that I hesitate to single out a particular article for comment. But "Modern Elections and Head of Households" by Aaron D. Wolf (*Views*, February) requires a note. I could hardly believe my eyes as I read the article. This kind of thinking is not to be expressed in this day and age. I wanted to cheer as I read it. Keep it coming. And thank you for adding Aaron Wolf to your staff. A job well done!

—Bruce Prentice
Allendale, MI

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NED FLANDERS—the gregarious, effeminate, Bible-thumping next-door-neighbor of Homer J. Simpson—has been canonized by *Christianity Today*, the leading voice of American evangelicalism. On the February 2001 cover, "Saint Flanders" is depicted in a Byzantine icon, holding a jewel-covered book in his left hand and making the sign of the Holy Trinity with his right. Marge and Homer (who holds the sacred doughnuts) appear as angels over his shoulders. "*The Simpsons*' Ned Flanders is the most visible evangelical to many Americans—and that's just okily dokily," reads the caption. No, sadly, this is not a joke. In fact, the folks at *Christianity Today* are right on track: Ned Flanders is the paragon of American evangelicalism. It's just too bad that the joke is on them.

The piece in CT is adapted from a book forthcoming from (of all places) Westminster/John Knox Press called *The Gospel According to the Simpsons: The Spiritual Life of America's Most Animated Family* by Mark I. Pinsky, who describes himself as "an observant Jew raised in a Northeastern suburb." He recounts (brilliantly written, hilarious) snippets from *Simpsons* episodes, which together give us a sort of profile of the man Homer calls "'Saint Flanders,' 'Charlie Church,' and 'Churchy La Femme.'" This article on the man Pinsky describes as a "complex and nuanced character who often raises serious issues" includes such subheadings as "Ned's Daily Obedience," "Ned's Dark Side," and "Ned's Tests of Faith." Under the latter, we are admonished that, "In one episode, too much gratitude from Homer turns out to be a deadly thing. Again, prayer plays a central role as a plot device." Yes, we're still talking about a cartoon character.

American evangelicalism, like that nerd in high school who always tries to get in good with the popular crowd, has been aping popular culture for years, trying to legitimize itself in the eyes of broader "mainline" Christianity, as well as secular popular culture. Ned Flanders is a caricature scribbled by the jocks on the side of a locker and laughed at by the cheerleaders; still, apparently, the nerds at CT are just so thrilled to be noticed that they have turned a blind eye to the fact that everyone is laughing *at* them, not *with* them.

Christianity Today was founded by evangelist Billy Graham and scholar Carl F.H. Henry in 1956, a time when a growing number of evangelicals were making every effort to distance themselves from the real "dorks"—such "fighting fundamentalists" as Bob Jones. It was intended to be the evangelical answer to the secular *Time* and the mainline *Christian Century*. The movement that grew around *Christianity Today* and Billy Graham (whom the fundamentalists promptly excommunicated) came to be called the "new evangelicalism" and was known by the tenets enumerated by Harold Ockenga: a "determination to engage . . . in the theological dialogue of the day" (which came to mean: "Start a Christian rock band"); the "reexamination [read: repudiation] of theological problems such as the antiquity of man, the universality of the Flood, and God's method of creation"; a "summons to social involvement" (passing out tracts in bikinis with Campus Crusade for Christ); and a "ringing call for a repudiation of separation" (i.e., separating from everyone who looks like a fundamentalist—even right-wing Lutherans and Catholics). Bob Jones, Jr., characterized the new evangelicals as saying, in effect, to the liberals: "We will call you 'Christian brothers' if you will call us 'doctor,' 'professor,' and 'scholar.'"

If CT is still the organ of (new) evangelical officialdom, then the heirs of Graham and Ockenga have a ways to go—though at least they now have an "indelible figure" representing them in the person of an animated cartoon character. Actually, Ned "Churchy La Femme" Flanders really isn't an evangelical (what sort of evangelical brews beer in his basement and carries around a relic of the true Cross?): He's a composite of everything the revolving, talented writing staff at *The Simpsons* find lampoonable about Christians—Catholic, mainline, evangelical, fundamentalist, and pentecostal.

The controversial cover drew many angry responses, particularly from Orthodox Christians, who accused editor David Neff of "desecrating an icon" and "attack[ing] . . . the Incarnation of Christ himself." Neff's reply was flippant and condescending: "This lighthearted cover had its theological side," he wrote, while citing the Protestant understanding of the priesthood of all believers—as if that would absolve him for "borrowing an artistic form historically reserved for extraordinary saints to say something important about the salt-of-the-earth believers next door." In an interview with the *Chicago Sun-Times*, he went on to say that "religion doesn't have a lock on self-importance."

Perhaps today's (new) evangelicals should be the ones returning bitter responses to CT, such as "Thank you for helping me realize that all of my attempts to be a hip, contemporary Christian have done nothing but degrade Christianity and make me look like cartoon supergeek Ned Flanders. Please cancel my subscription."

—*Aaron D. Wolf*

THE UNITED STATES always seem to need someone to demonize in order to have a functioning foreign policy. Now that Hitler, Stalin, and the "Evil Empire" are dead and gone, we have to make do with such lesser devils as Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin-Laden. The French have no such problem. They do not base their foreign policy on visions of foreign devils (if, in fact, France still has a foreign policy of her own). The French seem to derive a certain melancholy satisfaction from being able to feel superior to us—as they did during the Clinton presidency—or sorry for us, as they do now. Our former president was rather appreciated, for he and his impeachment adversaries gave them something to mock—both him as a figure of fun and the narrow-minded puritans opposing him, who do not understand what sex is.

We know why they laughed at us under Clinton, but why do they feel sorry for us now? On a recent visit to Aix-en-Provence, I met with Prof. Pierre Courtial, the 86-year-old grand old man of Protestant theology in France. Over tea, he asked me, "What will become of your country now?" "Why do you ask that?" I replied. "*Votre président*," he said. "Your President, Mr. Bush." M. Courtial apparently believed that Bush is not very bright; that he is a dangerous militarist; and that, at the same time, he is an old-fashioned isolationist. "America is the only superpower left. What will become of us all?"

In the course of a well-attended con-

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ference on the relationship between Christianity, money, and economics, it became evident that almost everyone shared M. Courtial's impression of the new President and of what his presidency might mean. They seem to derive their knowledge chiefly from a combination of Democratic Party press releases and the leading U.S. media, such as the *New York Times*. The major French dailies (*Le Figaro* and *Le Monde*) have their own sources, but they pay far more (and better) attention to affairs in Europe and North Africa than to what goes on in the United States. The result is that even learned Frenchmen have impressions of the President (and America in general) that sound like they came straight out of the *Nation*. The fact that Mr. Bush is the first American president with an M.B.A.—from Harvard Business School at that—surprised them. Perhaps the best point I made was that he has ended, at least temporarily, the tradition of playing "Hail to the Chief" whenever he appears in public. The audience was a bit perplexed about the significance of this, but when I translated "Hail to the Chief" into German—"*Heil dem Führer!*"—they saw the point. The idea that the new President not only has impressive intellectual credentials but seems to possess a measure of genuine humility both surprised and relieved them.

In Europe, Mr. Clinton had a reputation that was far better than his reality; for the time being, Mr. Bush has a reputation that is far inferior to the man himself. Most Americans neither know nor care what the French think, but what other nations think of us *is* important. If the French begin to see that we have chosen a President who is neither a buffoon nor a braggart, both of our nations will benefit.

—*Harold O.J. Brown*

GOD is back! And He has His own amusement park right here in Florida—you know, home of Disneyland, Universal Studios, and Seaworld. Welcome to Holyland!

Complete with a replica of Jesus's tomb, a bookstore and gift shop appropriately called "The Old Scroll," a legion of actors in biblical-era costume (including armored Roman soldiers) detailing the persecution of the early Christians, it's easy to imagine how Jesus must have felt walking the streets of Capernaum or the waters of the Sea of Galilee. I can almost taste the pomegranates now. And all for a measly $17. It sure beats the hell out of that other shrine down the road where, in place of a golden calf, they worship some silly rodent.

The only problem is that this latest attraction in the Sunshine State is currently under attack by a group of militant Jews, led by Mr. Irv Rubin of the Jewish Defense League, who feel the new park is nothing less than a conspiracy designed to undermine Judaism by stealthily attempting to convert Jews to Christianity, a blasphemy in itself worthy of a Roman crucifixion. To back him up, Mr. Rubin, along with Rabbi Merrill Shapiro of the Congregation Beth Am, has encouraged the entire Jewish community in Orlando—and anyone else, for that matter—to boycott the new Holyland.

If not for the Christian elements, presumably many Jews would welcome these 15 acres of prime Promised Land—which include a replica of Herod's Temple, the Ark of the Covenant, and more sofars, caftans, and shawls than you can shake a menorah at—not only for its historical accuracy but for its overall authenticity. That the creator of this $16-million tourist trap, Baptist minister Marvin Rosenthal, is actually a Jew by birth makes it even more suspect in the eyes of the zealots out to stone him to death (at least financially).

According to the protesters in Orlando, any Jew who proclaims the Divinity of Christ cannot be a Jew—a stipulation Jesus Himself would obviously have a problem with, and one St. Paul easily (and quite eloquently) disputes.

Mr. Rubin and his cohorts call Holyland an attempt at "soul-snatching," but if their faith is so weak that it cannot withstand a weekend at Mr. Rosenthal's holiday camp, how is it ever going to survive a real challenge, like when President Hillary Clinton appoints Sewar Arafat to be governor of the new Palestinian State and gives Prime Minister Sharon 24 hours to pack up his camel and get out of Jerusalem before Saddam Hussein begins using it for target practice? Or when the Church of Lilith finally proves that David was actually a lesbian queen, in much the same way they try to portray Jesus as the first gay, feminist vegetarian?

From an historical standpoint, it might be easy to empathize with the Jewish resistance in this particular case. They, after all, had to guard against such enterprises in the past, and understandably so. They are no strangers to persecution; but neither are Christians, nor any other culture or religion, for that matter. The difference is that, for the Jews at least, their culture *is* their religion. Unfortunately, Christians, with their many denominations, cannot claim that distinction, having been called from all corners of the earth. Had Jesus not been born a Jew, Mr. Rubin's assertion of cultural privilege and conflict of religion (which seems to be the basis for all the turmoil going on today in the Middle East) might be defensible.

Of course, there are good reasons to object to the "Holyland experience," as it is called. There is a danger in mixing capitalism and religion; just ask the moneychangers at the Temple, or Jim and Tammy Fay Bakker.

For that reason, it will be interesting to see if Holyland will follow in the footsteps of the prophet Eisner by surrendering its streets to the modern equivalent of the doomed residents of Sodom and Gomorrah, or—like the early Jews and Christians—keep the faith pure and unabated so that it doesn't eventually wind up resembling the barren walls of today's public schools and halls of justice. Obviously, the two orthodoxies may have more in common than they care to admit, including enemies. As one Jew once said: "He who is not against me is for me." As another one put it some years later: "It couldn't hurt."

Of course, I still don't know where my family and I will spend our vacation. But if we ever get to Holyland, I'll be sure to write . . . if I can find my scroll.

—*Joe Prussing*

THE MOLDOVAN COMMUNISTS won 71 of 101 seats in the February 25 parliamentary elections, to the chagrin of expansionist-minded NATOcrats. With an absolute majority in the parliament—which elects the country's president—pro-Russian elements in Moldova are likely to have one of their own as the country's chief executive. Moldovan Communist leader Vladimir Voronin announced that he intends to follow through with two pro-Russian campaign pledges: to make Russian Moldova's second "official language" (after years of anti-russophone actions by the Moldovan authorities), and to seek Moldova's admission to the Russia-Belarus Union, a loose political-economic alliance of the two Slavic states. The election also strengthened Moscow's hand in the breakaway

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Moldovan Dniester republic, a largely Slavic region that had long sought Moscow's protection from a pro-Rumanian government.

Meanwhile, Ukraine also appears to be moving closer to Russia—and away from NATO. Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma, accused of ordering the murder last fall of journalist Georgy Gongadze, who had chronicled Kuchma's cozy relations with the Ukrainian and Russian oligarch/mafia class, is now under pressure to resign. The Russians jumped at the opportunity to alter Kuchma's increasingly pro-Western, pro-NATO stance: Vladimir Putin visited Ukraine in February, offering a deal that would ease the country's energy crunch. (Ukraine depends on Russia for natural gas and is heavily indebted to Moscow for past energy shipments.) That and other economic morsels served up by Moscow—as well as the obvious show of support for the embattled Ukrainian president—proved to be an offer Kuchma could not refuse. Emboldened by Putin's support, Kuchma subsequently ordered the arrest of his archenemy, former Deputy Premier Yuliya Tymoshenko, on corruption charges. (The wily and very photogenic Tymoshenko is widely viewed as the organizer and financier of the anti-Kuchma opposition.)

Most observers in Kiev, Moscow, and the Moldavan capital of Chisinau saw February's developments as a major setback for NATO's plans to include both a united Rumanian/Moldovan state and a pro-Western (and anti-Russian) Ukraine in the alliance. Meanwhile, Russian proponents of an eventual Slavic Union saw the events as a boost for their plans to include both Moldova and Ukraine in an expanded Russia-Belarus commonwealth, dashing NATO's apparent plans to encircle and isolate a weakened Russia.

American and European opponents of the globalist/imperialist project can take heart: The world outside the Washington Beltway is proving to be quite a stubborn and frustrating place for the Masters of the Universe, who will have to wait a little longer for the "end of history."

—Denis Petrov

As the Bush administration finishes its first four months in office, the big legal news is that there is no big news. There have been some hopeful signs: the appointment of John Ashcroft as attorney general; the appointment of Theodore Olson as solicitor general. Both are distinguished conservatives, the former associated with the Burkean wing of the conservative movement, the latter with the free-market conservatives of the Federalist Society. Still, while the national press seemed obsessed with the Clinton pardon scandals, the Bush tax cut, and the possible meltdown on Wall Street, almost nothing was heard about the future of the federal courts under George W. Bush.

We can only hope that someone, somewhere, in the new administration is carefully screening potential judges, with the purpose of accomplishing what Bush *père* botched—the reestablishment of a federal judiciary with an actual understanding of the Constitution and the law. The last Bush administration did a creditable job with many of the lower federal courts, but failed miserably (because of the appointment of Justice Souter to the Supreme Court) to reverse the trend of the Supremes to be lawmakers rather than interpreters. The next appointment to the Supreme Court is the one to watch for, as are the appointments to the federal courts of appeals. During the campaign, President Bush said the right thing when he promised more Supreme Court justices like Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, who believe that the only appropriate interpretation of the Constitution is the Framers' intent. If this view ever regains ascendance, it would not only spell the end of a constitutional right to abortion, but would return questions of education, criminal law, and religion and morality back to state and local governments—where the Framers wanted them.

Among the ranks of the sitting federal appellate court judges (from whence justices are now chosen) there are superb potential Supreme Court appointments who would move us back toward the original understanding. Judges Edith Jones and Emilio Garza of the Fifth Circuit and Chief Judge J. Harvie Wilkinson of the Fourth are certainly possibilities. All three of these, however, might lead to a pitched battle in the Senate, which may now be Republican in name only; if—God forbid—anything happens to Strom Thurmond (while South Carolina has a Democratic governor), even RINO status will end.

Scalia is only on the Court because, for a brief time under Reagan, the Republicans controlled the Senate, and Thomas got through after one of the most bitter nomination battles in memory only because he was able to complain of a "high-tech lynching." The Thomas nomination was Bush Senior's finest hour, and we will soon be able to measure his son's true constitutional mettle. The unscrupulous characters who opposed Thomas are still out there; while they lost the election and their attempts to overturn it, they haven't given up. While it was understood that the Ashcroft confirmation was supposed to be a rehearsal for the real bloodletting that should occur when a Supreme Court justice is nominated, the forces of darkness seemed strangely blunted, since no tar stuck to the nominee—not even in the usual liberal media organs. Perhaps now—while the odor of the Clinton pardons lingers; while the Reverend Jackson is explaining his dalliances, his income taxes, and the federal funding of his organizations and their funding of his mistress; and while the new President continues to astonish his erstwhile critics by his unexpected competence—is the time for Dubya to deliver on his campaign promises about the Supreme Court.

—Stephen B. Presser

Obiter dicta: Charles Edward Eaton, who lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, is our first poet this month. Mr. Eaton is the author of 15 collections of poetry (most recently *The Jogger by the Sea*), four volumes of short stories, and a novel, *A Lady of Pleasure*. He is the recipient of the North Carolina Award for Literature, among other prizes. His autobiography, *The Man From Buena Vista*, will be published this year.

The poetry of **Constance Rowell Mastores** of Oakland, California, returns to our pages this month. Her poems have appeared in the *Lyric*, *Press*, *Blue Unicorn*, *Boulevard*, and *Artweek*, among others.

Our artwork this month is provided by our art director, **H. Ward Sterett** of Roscoe, Illinois. Mr. Sterett received his B.F.A. from the University of Colorado and his M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University, and attended the L'Abri Fellowship, where he studied the effect of Christianity on art. He currently works as a sculptor, painter, and printmaker in Roscoe.

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Chronicles' Back Issues, Tapes, and Books

* The Rockford Institute's Rome Convivium *

LEGENDS OF EARLY ROME; ROMAN MYTHS AND RITUALS—Audiotape— From the earliest iron-age settlements on the Palatine Hill through tales of Romulus and Remus and Aeneas, classicist Thomas Fleming describes how the legends of the Romans inspired their greatness for 500 years, while art historian Gail Fleming explains their religious practices and beliefs.
Tape #: RFR1 **$12.50**

WRITERS IN ROME I: ROME THE WONDERFUL; CICERO, CATO, CLAUDIUS, AND CAESAR—Audiotape—Chilton Williamson, Jr., *Chronicles*' senior editor for books, weaves together the impressions formed by British literary figures during their sojourns in the Eternal City; Thomas Fleming's "Four C's of Rome Lecture" includes two heroes and two villains of the Roman Republic.
Tape #: RFR2 **$12.50**

ROME FROM REPUBLIC TO EMPIRE; RECREATING ROME—Audiotape— Srdja Trifkovic, *Chronicles*' foreign-affairs editor, tells the Roman version of the story that is told of all great nations—how, in becoming empires, republics destroy themselves; Thomas Fleming brings new life to the Augustan age, during which the Emperor Augustus "found Rome a city of brick and left it a city of marble."
Tape #: RFR3 **$12.50**

IMAGES OF THE APOCALYPSE—Audiotape—Dr. James Patrick—theologian, architect, and provost of the College of Saint Thomas More in Fort Worth—illustrates his argument that there once was a time when Christians attended Mass with thoughts of death and judgment on their minds by explaining the apocalyptic meaning of images found in the mosaics of Rome's earliest churches.
Tape #: RFR4 **$12.50**

ROMAN SPIES AND SPIES IN ROME; WRITERS IN ROME II—Audiotape— Srdja Trifkovic, *Chronicles*' foreign-affairs editor, reveals the long history of Roman espionage, beginning with the "elaborate intelligence network" of the Roman legions and ending with the KGB and the Masons; Chilton Williamson, Jr., *Chronicles*' senior editor for books, reveals the indelible impressions left on American writers by the Eternal City.
Tape #: RFR5 **$12.50**

RESTORATIONS: CONSTANTINE, ARNOLD, REINZO, DUCE—Audiotape— "All of Rome is like a palimpsest that has been written over time after time," begins Thomas Fleming, in this lecture describing the Eternal City's perpetual state of renewal and restoration, "and this process of recycling building material is also evident in the political and cultural history of Rome."
Tape #: RFR6 **$12.50**

ROME IN THE AGE OF MARTYRS; PAPAL ROME—Audiotape—*Chronicles*' assistant editor, Aaron D. Wolf, provides a stirring and graphic account of the persecutions of the early Christians in Rome and reminds us that all Christians are called to martyrdom; Italian journalist Marco Respinti argues that Rome cannot be properly understood apart from its papal character.
Tape #: RFR7 **$12.50**

GOOD POPES/BAD POPES—Audiotape—While many saintly men and a handful of some of history's most enthusiastic sinners have occupied the Chair of Peter, none has ever taught error on a question of faith and morals. Christopher Check, executive vice president of The Rockford Institute, highlights some of the best (and a few of the worst) of the vicars of Christ, from Clement I through Leo XIII.
Tape #: RFR8 **$12.50**

PIO NONO AND HIS ENEMIES; THE PAPACY—Audiotape—Italian journalist Alberto Carosa tells the story of the undeservedly maligned Pope Pius IX; theologian Roberto de Mattei explains how the papal tiara symbolizes the authority of the institutional papacy and argues that the decision to end the papal coronation ceremony has had unhappy consequences for the modern understanding of sovereignty.
Tape #: RFR9 **$12.50**

PAPAL ROME FROM NAPOLEON TO BERLUSCONI—Audiotape—Italian journalist Marco Respinti explores the extent to which Rome's papal character has manifested itself as a sign of contradiction in the era of Napoleon and his spiritual descendants, including media mogul Silvio Berlusconi. Discover why the Italian right is as clueless as its American counterpart.
Tape #: RFR10 **$12.50**

WHY I DON'T LIVE IN ROME; ITALIAN LESSONS FROM E.M. FORSTER—Audiotape—Has globalism ruined Rome or is *Chronicles*' European correspondent, Andrei Navrozov, overreacting? Decide for yourself after listening to this lighthearted account of the fading glories of Roman life; Thomas Fleming considers Rome through the principles—friendship and loyalty—that animated E.M. Forster's fiction.
Tape #: RFR11 **$12.50**

"THE ETERNAL CITY THROUGH TIME" COLLECTORS' SET—11 Audiotapes and One Back Issue—This collection includes the taped proceedings of the January 2001 Convivium, "The Eternal City Through Time" (tape #s RFR1, RFR2, RFR3, RFR4, RFR5, RFR6, RFR7, RFR8, RFR9, RFR10, and RFR11), and a free copy of the May 2001 issue of *Chronicles* (back issue # T015). A savings of $34.50.
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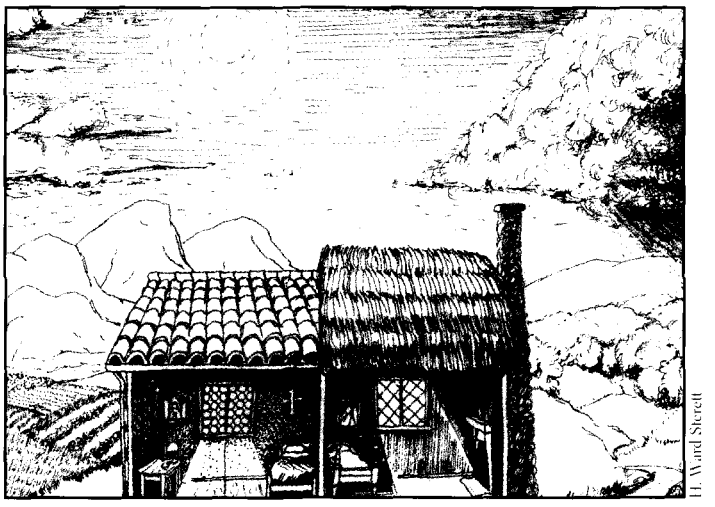

Two Rooms With a View

by Thomas Fleming

It has been the usual 36-hour day spent in airports under siege from CNN and microwave-burned pizza, cramped into buses, taxis, and the midget seats of American Airlines steerage with two varieties of undrinkable wine-product to wash down the "looks-like-chicken" alternative to the inevitable "pasta" they serve on flights to Italy, but now we are actually in our room at the Hotel Forum. It is a sunny winter's day, and last night's rain is still steaming up from the potholes and depressions of the Via dei Fori Imperiali, a street that has not been well maintained since Il Duce (who built it as an imperial avenue to connect the Piazza Venezia with the Colosseum) had to leave Rome suddenly for a vacation in the mountains. I throw open the windows and look out upon the Forum of Augustus and the street where the cars and buses ride—their drivers blissfully unaware—on top of the ruins of Trajan's library. We are almost too happy to be in Rome, and I am struck once again by the disconcerting thought that I may be joining the ranks of so many English and American writers who became expatriates and cultural traitors.

Apart from Hemingway's first novel and, if you can stand them, some of Henry James' fiction dealing with Americans abroad, few of these writers set their best works in Italy or France. One exception is E.M. Forster. Despite the popularity of his "foreign" novels (and the films based on them), Forster has been routinely ridiculed by conservatives (especially during the Cold War) as the intellectual cheerleader for the Cambridge "homintern" (as George Orwell described the homosexual artsy types who went to work for the Soviet Union), and the embodiment of the "*trahison des clercs*" among the chattering class.

In his 1938 essay "Two Cheers for Democracy," Forster made his famous declaration of disloyalty: "[I]f I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country."

Forster's bald statement does *seem* like an invitation to treason, and a sketch of his career does little to dispel the miasma emitted by his essay—a homosexual Cambridge Apostle and a friend of John Maynard Keynes, Lytton Strachey, and the Woolfs; a partisan of the Boers during the Boer War, a conscientious objector in the Great War, and a critic of imperial policy between the wars; a prominent member of the communist front National Council of Civil Liberties—so many steps in the traitor's *cursus honorum*.

The outline, however, is deceiving. Forster was never much of a leftist. He belonged, by his own account, to "the fag-end of Victorian liberalism." Although he did come to believe that capitalism was destroying society, his conventional social views should have endeared him to conservatives on both sides of the Atlantic: faith in the individual, belief in hard work, appreciation of the middle classes.

Why would such a man advocate treason? The simple answer is that he did not. Forster's full sentence begins: "I hate the idea of causes," before going on to say, "and if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country." He concludes not with a ringing declaration of the duty to aid the class struggle but with an appeal to ancient and medieval notions of loyalty and friendship: "Such a choice may scandalize the modern reader . . . It would not have shocked Dante, though. Dante places Brutus and Cassius in the lowest circle of Hell because they had chosen to betray their friend Julius Caesar rather than their country Rome."

Of course, Forster may have made an historical error in believing Shakespeare's Mark Antony—who said "Brutus was Caesar's angel"—but far from calling for ideological commitment, he was declaring his opposition to even *the idea of causes*.

Forster's second novel, *The Longest Journey*, gives a clearer

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sense of where he stood. When one Cambridge student makes the case for having loyalty to "the great world," his friend tells him that

> There is no great world at all, only a little earth, for ever isolated from the rest of the little solar system. The earth is full of tiny societies, and Cambridge is one of them. All the societies are narrow, but some are good and some are bad—just as one house is beautiful inside and another ugly . . . The good societies say, "I tell you to do this because I am Cambridge." The bad ones say, "I tell you to do that because I am the great world—not because I am 'Peckham,' or 'Billingsgate,' or 'Park Lane,' but because I am the great world."

In Forster's first novel, *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, the tiny society is formed within the family by the bonds of blood. Lilia is a pretty and somewhat romantic widow whose disapproving in-laws send her to Italy to get a little refinement. To their chagrin, she actually marries one of the locals—an idle and worthless fortune hunter—to whom she bears a child before dying.

Lilia's sister-in-law, a grave young Englishwoman who had "bolted all the cardinal virtues and couldn't digest them," is shocked to discover, as she watches the fortune-hunting Italian father with his child, "that wicked people are capable of love." Forster, describing the scene, makes the comment that the Italian father's "desire that his son should be like him, and should have sons like him to people the earth" is "the strongest desire to come to a man."

The baby's English stepsister is a rabid Anglican ideologue (if such a thing is possible); she refuses to acknowledge the validity of such an immoral bond between a corrupt man and his son, and, by stealing the child, she is the cause of his death. Gino, at least, was not a Cuban communist, or she might have had additional justification for the kidnapping.

Forster's best-known heroine, Lucy Honeychurch, is another English girl who is smitten with Italy, where she begins to savor not just art and beauty but something of the Italian passion for living. When her Florence adventure turns sour, she and her companion go on to Rome where she meets a well-to-do expatriate, Cecil Vyse, who proposes marriage.

Lucy is given the clear choice of a higher, more "Italian" life with Cecil Vyse, but to take it, she must be disloyal to her family and break with her middle-class experience. "Make her one of us," her high-toned future mother-in-law tells her son. Cecil says of himself that he is an "*Inglese Italianato*," which, as the proverb goes, is "*un diavolo incarnato*." Although Cecil is merely affecting "a cosmopolitan naughtiness which he was far from possessing," he is, after all, a genuine devil, in tempting Lucy into a life of treason against her family and her upbringing.

But, if Italy has taught Cecil to despise his own country, it has taught Lucy to see beauty in her own neighborhood: "How beautiful the weald looked! The hills stood out above its radiance, as Fiesole stands above the Tuscan Plan, and the South Downs, if one chose, were the mountains of Carrara. She might be forgetting her Italy," thinks Lucy to herself as she looks across the Weald, "but she was noticing more things in England. One could play a new game with the view, and try to find in its innumerable folds some town or village that would do for Florence."

Part of this new perspective was obviously aesthetic and cultural; it was also moral. As a conventional radical, Lucy had been learning to despise the suburban bourgeoisie and anyone outside the charmed

> circle of rich, pleasant people, with identical interests and identical foes . . . But in Italy, where anyone who chooses may warm himself in equality, as in the sun, this concept of life vanished. Her senses expanded; she felt there was no one whom she might not get to like, that social barriers were irremovable, doubtless, but not particularly high. You jump over them just as you jump into a peasant's olive garden in the Apennines, and he is glad to see you. She returned with new eyes.

The communists and expatriates are wrong: Loving Italy is not incompatible with loving your own country or your hometown. This was something the ancient Romans understood. They could worship their local gods in Britain or Armenia while still acknowledging the power of Capitoline Jupiter or Sol Invictus. They could, like Diocletian, govern the known world and never give up their longing for their native province. In fact, Diocletian retired to Dalmatia to raise cabbages.

Forster's education was almost entirely classical, and his dilemma—whether it is better to betray one's friend or one's country—was posed long ago by an ancient philosopher, who (according to Cicero) asked if a son should inform on a father who has been robbing a temple or digging tunnels into the treasury. The philosopher thought it would be wrong, arguing that the son should defend his father in court, because it is in the country's interest to have citizens loyal to their parents.

Any nation requires loyalty from its citizens, but not the self-annihilating loyalty demanded by Nazi Germany, Stalinist Russia, or democratic states that impose loyalty oaths, saying (in the words of Merle Haggard), "If you don't love it, leave it" to Forster's tiny societies of family, village, and college.

In the years since the publication of *The Longest Journey* and *A Room With a View*, the Great World has been making headway against Cambridge and Billingsgate and Laramie and Milwaukee. Colleges and universities have been absorbed by the state; families are enmeshed in a social-service bureaucracy that would have astounded the creators of the welfare state. In the United States, schoolchildren are asked to turn their parents in for using drugs or for abusing ("abuse" may include any form of corporal punishment) them. The child is forced to choose between betraying his parents and betraying the government that can make such a request.

In the 1930's, E.M. Forster, a simple novelist who was not used to reflecting too deeply, concluded that people mattered more than principles, even when those principles are embodied in a government apparatus. Ever since, he has been reproached by anticommunists for his disloyalty. In some cases, they have simply failed to read him correctly. But even if they did, there may be few political intellectuals, whether of the right or of the left, who would be willing to defend Forster's almost feudal sense of personal loyalty.

Through the long years of the Cold War, we got in the habit of defining ourselves by what we opposed, and an imaginary Berlin Wall was built between the "capitalist" right and the "disloyal" left. In the course of the conflict, all of Burke's "little platoons" and Forster's "tiny societies" were conscripted to serve the national ideologies of Russia and the United States and perished in the struggle for the world. c

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Whirling Dervish

by Charles Edward Eaton

Green is whirling, whirling—who can stop it?
Ecstasy is health, but has some aspects of disease:
Keep turning like the dervish—you fall or vomit.

What an odd figure this may seem for spring!—
The daze of green makes you dizzy as a wobbling top:
Green is in the air you breathe—the pollen and the
poisoning.

The dervish must feel the universe has him by the throat
As the tightest feeling sometimes grabs the lover:
For allergic eyes looking at the richest pictures—no
remote.

There is, you sense, an emerald grinding in your skull,
The flying fragments pack the reaches of the brain:
The impact of two greens—the world is throbbing with
the beautiful.

Roses, sunflowers—such *et cetera*!—will fling their colors
As the season moves. The object is to whirl and stay on
foot:
The force of vertigo is not without its object-subject
dolors.

Somehow for lovers, the angel of evenness comes to
rescue—
The magic of balance moves across the most exquisite
days:
You embrace the manifold, and it is in love with you.

DICTATIONS

Freedom From Freedom of Religion

"Faith-based initiatives"? Sounds like the President may be talking about a crusade or a 12-step program run by the Salvation Army. What he has in mind, of course, is the enlistment of "religious" groups in government programs designed to reform the world. Critics and supporters of the proposal both invoke the principle of "freedom of religion," which is interpreted, on one hand, by anti-Christians like the Rev. Al Sharpton to mean freedom *from* religion and, on the other hand, by members of the so-called Christian so-called Right to mean the freedom to impose their woozy notions on the children of darkness.

Faith (Greek *pistis*) is literally the trust that Christians place in their Creator and their Savior, as well as the theological and historical basis of that trust as summed up in the Scriptures and the Creeds. Although the Old Testament speaks often of trust in God, for Jews (almost as much as Greeks), the emphasis was on the objective fulfillment of one's ritual duties rather than on the believer's state of mind. For Christians, faith became synonymous with belief and was used for the entire Church or its various warring parts.

"Religion" and "religious," although we use them loosely to refer to Christianity or a branch thereof and to any institution directed toward worship of a god or gods, are also used in the narrower sense of "dutifully carrying out an obligation." We speak of religious clergy who have taken additional vows and of people who mow their lawns "religiously." This usage goes back to the original Latin sense of *religio*: the fulfillment of a duty, particularly to the gods. The dutiful fulfillment of ritual obligation was the hallmark of Roman "religion," and the Latin term has been adopted as a technical term by sociologists of "religion."

Over the last hundred years, we have fallen into sloppy habits of speech—and, therefore, of thought—and instead of referring to "common traditions of Christians and Jews," we have allowed "Judeo-Christian" to be imposed on us, a term that should be offensive to both Jews and Christians, whose specific beliefs are hybridized into something resembling a churkey. Lately, we seem to be granting religious status to anyone with faith enough to bite the head off a chicken or get stoned on peyote. As usual, the leaders of the so-called Christian so-called Right lead the way, defending the religious freedom of Korean messiahs and the followers of a sci-fi writer who put a smiley-face on Aleister Crowley.

We ought to ban the use of the word "religion" except in the Latin sense, restrict "faith" to its proper meaning of a system of belief and trust in God, and speak otherwise only of Christianity or Judaism or Islam or Santeria. If the result is that Aztecs cannot slaughter goats and children in their basements, no tears should be shed. If the government can only tolerate me by tolerating them, I prefer persecution.

—*Humpty Dumpty*

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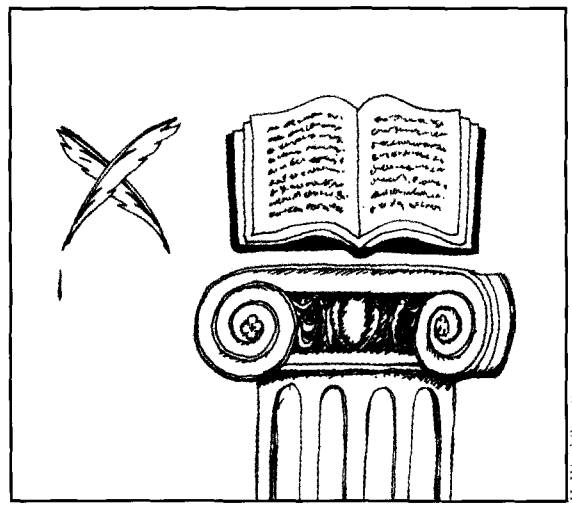
Rome As You Find It

American and British Writers in the Eternal City

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.



For Englishmen, the Roman Forum was nearly as much a part of their political heritage as the Tower of London or Westminster Abbey. Since Colonial America was a part of British culture, educated American colonists shared in the British reverence for antiquity. Eighteenth-century Englishmen (and those Americans who could manage it) traveled to Italy—Rome in particular—in search of roots of the kind that have nothing to do with ethnicity, and everything to do with culture and the burden of a glorious shared past.

Philip Stanhope, earl of Chesterfield, whose letters to his son express the ideal of the civilized life conceived of as a Mozart concerto, visited Rome only once, as a young man. In 1750, he offered this advice: "You will probably never see Rome again; and therefore you ought to see it well now: by seeing it well, I do not mean only the buildings, statues, and paintings; though they undoubtedly deserve your attention; but I mean seeing into the constitution and government of it." Earlier, Chesterfield suggested his private view of the English community at Rome when he wrote of the "sauntering, illiterate English . . . living entirely with one another, supping, drinking, and sitting up late at each others' lodgings; commonly in riots and scrapes when drunk; and never in good company when sober." Elsewhere, he remarks, "You seem to like Rome. . . . Have you made an acquaintance with some eminent Jesuits? I know no people in the world more instructive." Given the earl's detestation of popery, the comment may be surprising. The Catholic Church, however, seems to have had a fascination for Chesterfield (as it did for many English and even more, as we shall see, for American visitors to Rome), since he also wrote, in an earlier letter, "A *propos* of the Pope: remember to be presented to him before you leave Rome, and go through the necessary ceremonies for it, whether of kissing his slipper or his b-h; for I would never deprive myself of anything that I wanted to do or see, by refusing to comply with an established custom."

In the fall of 1764, 14 years after *le petit* Stanhope left Rome, another Englishmen, far better known today, arrived there. The young gentleman, only recently a British military officer, had come down to Italy from Geneva, where he had lived for some years and rediscovered his Protestant faith after losing it temporarily to popery. Twenty-five years later, memories of his first view of Rome remained sharp in his mind.

> I can neither forget nor express the strong emotions which agitated my mind as I first approached and entered the *eternal city*. After a sleepless night I trod, with lofty step, the ruins of the forum; each memorable stop where Romulus *stood*, or Tully spoke, or Caesar fell, was at once present to my eye; and several days of intoxication were lost or enjoyed before I could descend to a cool and minute investigation.

Chilton Williamson, Jr., is the senior editor for books at Chronicles.

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A few days after his arrival, he wrote to his father in England:

> I am now Dear Sir at Rome. If it was difficult before to give you or Mrs. Gibbon any account of what I saw it is impossible here. I have already found such a fund of entertainment for a mind somewhat prepared for it by an acquaintance with the Romans, that I am really almost in a dream. Whatever ideas books may have given us of the greatness of that people, Their accounts of the most flourishing state of Rome fall infinitely short of the picture of its ruins. I am convinced there never never existed such a nation and I hope for the happiness of mankind that there never will again.

In expressing hope that, for mankind's sake, no new Rome would ever arise, Edward Gibbon expressed his ambivalence on the subject that became his life's work. Only days or weeks later, presumably, he had his memorable experience, memorably expressed, of sitting by the Campodoglio listening to the monks chant vespers when the idea for *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* occurred to him.

For most Americans visiting Rome in the 19th century, up to and after the War Between the States, the gap between Roman religiosity and Roman behavior was, quite simply, scandalous.

By the beginning of the 19th century, Rome had become, for English writers, less an ancient model and *fons et origo* than what we would call today an interactive artwork, offering a sensuous contemporary experience as much as a recreative intellectual one. At the same time, Italy as a whole, in the early *Risorgimento*, was, like Greece, a symbol of nationalistic freedom and secular progressivism. Lord Byron's appreciation of Rome, which he saw for the first time in 1817, is typical of the English poetic response of the period—less cerebral than emotional.

Byron had been living in Venice, enjoying Carnival and another man's wife when he—reluctantly—yielded to his friend John Hobhouse's urging to join him in Rome. "Rome the wonderful," he called it, when he finally saw the city. Before, the poet had found perfection only in nature. Now, he thought he could fully comprehend the passion for art he had previously dismissed as "cant." "As a *whole*," he wrote, "*ancient* and *modern*, it beats Greece, Constantinople, every thing." Once settled in, he had a look at the town: "I have this morning seen a live pope and a dead cardinal." On the saddle horses he brought with him, he rode "all about the country," had his bust done by Bertel Thorswalden, and witnessed a public execution at which three criminals were guillotined. The day after the execution, he was off to Lombardy.

Byron's friend Percy Bysshe Shelley, arriving in Rome several years later, found "that the story of the Cenci was a subject not to be mentioned in Italian society without awaking a deep and breathless interest." This story (of events in Rome at the end of the 16th century) concerned Beatrice, a beautiful young noblewoman who, after submitting to her father's incestuous attack, killed him with the help of her mother and brother; all of them were later put to death by order of the pope himself. The story haunted Shelley for many reasons, especially because he perceived the pope to be responsible for the tragedy, underscoring the contrast between the nature of Catholic and Protestant piety.

Shelley found the ultimate meaning of the tragedy of the Cenci to be what he called Catholicism's "combination of an undoubting persuasion of the truth of the popular religion with a cool and determined perseverance in enormous guilt." For him, this was the deepest horror.

For most Americans visiting Rome in the 19th century, up to and after the War Between the States, the gap between Roman religiosity and Roman behavior was, quite simply, scandalous. It did not help that, as Erik Amfitheatrof has said, they approached the Vatican pretty much the way Americans in the 1950's and 60's approached the Kremlin. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, paying the city a visit as a young man in 1828, wrote, "Whenever I go to the principal street of the city at the hour for promenade, I see a lady of the highest tone, who has a rich young banker as her *cicisbeo*, driving in her carriage, with her daughter, her husband and her lover!" Yet Longfellow experienced what he described as "the awe and sublime joy which every student must feel when looking his first upon the 'lone mother of dead empires,'" whose effect, he admitted, was to render him "almost delirious." And Herman Melville, stopping over in Rome on his way home from the Holy Land, though at first he found the city "oppressively flat," carefully explored its galleries and museums.

Wintering in Rome became an American fashion in the 1840's and 50's for such people as Francis Parkman, Charles Eliot Norton, Theodore Parker, Julia Ward Howe, and James Russell Lowell. Mrs. Howe, predictably, was appalled by the Roman Church's failure—indeed, its unwillingness—to live up to the sentiments expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the practices of a Boston political ward. Lowell agreed with his friend Norton that the Roman Church was moribund and made it a point to avoid St. Peter on Easter Sunday so as not to be tempted by "the mockery of Pio Nono's blessing."

Margaret Fuller, the transcendentalist poet, author, journalist, and editor, was in Rome in 1848 as a roving correspondent for Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune* when she met William Wetmore Story, a Massachusetts attorney and son of Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story who had come to Italy to sculpt his father's bust on a commission from the Commonwealth. Not long after their meeting, Margaret Fuller vanished, only to reappear less than a month later and confide mysteriously, "I am not the same person, but in many respects another." The cause for this transformation, the Storys soon learned, was the Marchese Angelo Ossoli della Torre, the youngest son of a noble family that owned a palazzo in Rome as well as a fortress in the Sabine country, whom she had met at dusk at St. Peter's. Though a marchese, Ossoli was a partisan of Mazzini and a member of the newly formed Roman militia known as the Civil Guard.

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That spring, the Revolution of 1848 broke out all over Europe—Paris, Berlin, and finally Milan, whose citizens drove Prince Radetzky's troops out of the city and, for a while, out of Lombardy. Ossoli and Margaret were overjoyed by these events; as Fuller wrote, "I have seen the Austrian arms dragged through the streets of Rome and burned in the Piazza del Popolo." She sent a letter to Greeley resigning as correspondent for the paper "just," he moaned, "as Italy and Europe were in the throes of a great Revolution." Of course, she didn't give him the reason: She was pregnant by Ossoli.

After the fall of the short-lived Roman Republic in 1849, Margaret and Ossoli went into hiding. A year later, they set sail for New York on the *Elizabeth*, which was wrecked several weeks later off the coast of Fire Island. Margaret Fuller, Marquesa de Ossoli, her husband, and infant child were lost, along with the manuscript of Margaret's work in progress, the *History of the Roman Republic*.

Two other members of the William Wetmore Story circle in Rome were Nathaniel Hawthorne and his wife Sophia, who, as a girl, had known Margaret Fuller in Massachusetts. For Hawthorne, Rome was a case of hate at first sight. "I hate the Roman atmosphere," he wrote. "[W]hat impresses me is the languor of Rome, its weary pavements, its little life, pressed down by the weight of death." After two weeks in the city, he felt no better about the place. "We have been in Rome . . . a fortnight," he wrote in his *Italian Notebooks*, " . . . and I have seldom or never spent so wretched a time anywhere. . . . [O]ld Rome does seem to lie here like a dead and mostly decayed corpse, retaining here and there a trace of the noble shape it was, but with a sort of fungus growth upon it, and no life but the worms that creep in and out."

Gradually, however, his mood softened as he investigated Rome further. On a second visit to St. Peter's, which he had initially found "a terrible disappointment," he found its beauty and magnitude growing upon him. Even on his first visit, this rockribbed New England Puritan had been touched by the hundreds of men and women kneeling at the numerous confessionals, confessing themselves in as many languages: "This popish religion certainly does apply itself most clearly and comfortably to human occasions," he wrote at the time. On departing Rome, his final reflections had to do with his daughter, whom he feared he and his wife had done no good by bringing her to see the "city of the soul," if the result were to be an "unsatisfied yearning" to return. He need not have worried: The young lady, perhaps agreeing with her father's conclusion that "Protestantism needs a new apostle to connect it into something positive," entered the Roman Catholic Church not many years later.

Unlike Hawthorne, Mark Twain found nothing in the city to inspire hate, but plenty to provoke yawns and bad jokes. That, anyhow, became his literary conceit. "What is there in Rome for me to see that others have not seen before me?" he asked in *The Innocents Abroad*. "What is there for me to touch that others have not touched? What is there for me to feel, to learn, to hear, to know, that shall thrill me before it pass to others? What can I discover? Nothing. Nothing whatsoever. One charm of travel dies here." In writing *The Innocents Abroad*, Twain, like many a satirist before and since, employed excess to counter excess—in this case, using Western knownothingism as a means of deflating the worshipful view of European culture entertained by the American Northeastern elite who were the *real* targets of such episodes in the book as the trip to the Colosseum, where he imagines American circus-style posters advertising the gladiatorial combats, or his put-on of the Roman museum guide to whom he and his friends feign an ignorance of schoolboy culture. It is possible, in short, to take Mark Twain's put-down of the Old World generally, and Rome in particular, a little more seriously than he intended it to be taken.

At the same time, after the War Between the States, American visitors to Rome arrived with a different attitude from what their predecessors had displayed. William Dean Howells, the formally uneducated, small-town Ohio novelist who first saw the city as a young man in 1864, arrived there from Venice, where he was serving as U.S. consul, in a consciously anti-romantic frame of mind. His first impressions make even Hawthorne's seem polite by comparison. In Rome, Howells found "a dirty cowfield . . . filled with mere fragments and rubbish . . . obscenely defiled by wild beasts of men." The Forum he thought a morass of "incoherent columns overthrown and mixed with dilapidated walls—doubly representing the past, out of which all vocal glory had departed."

For Americans in the preceding hundred years, Rome and its symbolic Colosseum had been a font of inspiration and the ancient Republic the historic seat of liberty, defended valiantly by Cincinnatus, Cicero, and Cato the Younger—American heroes all. From now on, however, Howells' attitude was to become typical. When Howells saw Rome again in 1908, he was an old man, internationally famous, and America had become an empire more powerful than the Mother of Empires. After being escorted round the city by the mayor, Howells, still unimpressed, went home and wrote an essay called "An Effort to be Honest With Antiquity." "Rome," he concluded, "either republican or imperial, was a state for which we can have no genuine reverence."

The change, of course, did not occur overnight. And there were still well-educated Americans, knowledgeable in classical learning, who appreciated the Eternal City for all the old reasons. Henry Adams in 1860—the year before war broke out at home—described a "medieval Rome" he found to be a kind of "sorcery," while even the modern one he thought "the worst spot on earth to teach nineteenth-century youth what to do with a twentieth-century world"—which, for Adams, was a compliment. Sitting on the steps of the Ara Coeli—which, with its Santo Bambino, had been for generations the supreme butt of anticlerical Americans—Adams had an intuition: "Rome is going to be America." Adams understood that, for his fellow Americans, the "Italian troubles," as he called them, were simply a process by which "one more of the civilized races" was dedicating itself to principles Americans had already decided were the "heart and soul of modern civilization."

When Henry James arrived in 1869, he almost immediately had to step aside to avoid being run down by Pio Nino riding in his black coach drawn by black horses. "At last—for the first time I live! For the first time I know what the picturesque is." His enthusiasm for the picturesque did not, as it turned out, extend to "brutish-looking monks," "the uncleanness of monarchism," old churches, and so forth. But James loved the Campagna, where he rode horseback regularly, delighting in the open country, American-like in its wildness, and the walled city containing a cozy urban world of shops, cafés, theaters, balls, and parties; the two made, he wrote in his essay "Roman Rides," a "double life." Within the "great gates," he, like so many American—and German, French, and English—writers,

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found an array of classical backdrops for his characters, including Roderick Hudson, the protagonist of his first book, *Daisy Miller*, and Isabel Archer. For both, the Colosseum provides the setting for their greatest scenes.

At some point early in the 20th century, foreign visitors—Americans in particular—began arriving in Rome with the aim of observing the future at work, rather than the past in repose. Among these were Progressive muckrakers Ida Tarbell and Lincoln Steffens, both fervent admirers of Benito Mussolini. For May Day 1920, Steffens traveled up to Rome from the south to witness the Fascists taking power. For Steffens, fascism was acceptable as an amoral movement less severe—and therefore more palatable—than Bolshevism: "genially experimental and always growing and playing," he called it. Rome, he believed, inculcated a consciousness of history that had succeeded in giving the lower classes an awareness of the future. "The Italians," Steffens wrote, "are the future of Rome. They are the future of all other people too."

In the 1930's, though, the burden of Italian fascism was beginning to weigh on Rome's image, at least among most Americans. More and more, American novelists and poets kept to the north of the city, rarely traveling south. Even the Italophile Sinclair Lewis, who was to die in Rome in 1951, set the spiritual regeneration of his Sam Dodsworth, an American auto-industry executive, in Venice and Naples rather than the Eternal City. Similarly, *All the King's Men*, a fictional treatment of Gov. Huey Long of Louisiana by Robert Penn Warren, was partly composed in Rome and Perugia, where Warren described bully boys in black shirts giving funny salutes.

Ezra Pound, though he spent much of his life in Italy and admired Mussolini, apparently had little interest in or affection for Rome, a city he visited chiefly on political business. In 1935, during the Ethiopian crisis, Pound visited the Eternal City, "apparently feeling," as his biographer Humphrey Carpenter comments, "that he should be near the seat of government at this crucial moment." On January 30, 1933, Pound received an audience with Il Duce in the Palazzo Venezia in Rome. He was allowed a half-hour, long enough for the poet to expound on the essentials of his Social Credit plan and for Mussolini to pronounce the *Cantos* Pound had sent him ahead of time "diverting." Pound was not recalled to The Presence afterward. Late in 1939, he traveled to Rome to suggest to the minister of popular culture—in reality, the minister of propaganda—that he, Pound, host a wireless program broadcast to America. "Well," he later wrote, "the Minister looked at me careful and said in perlite words to the effect that: Ez, or probably he said 'Mio Caro Signore,' if you think you can use OUR air to monkey in American INTERNAL politics you got another one comin'." Eventually, however, Pound did a few mild recordings by way of audition, and on the strength of these was engaged to appear on the American Hour with a series of regular broadcast talks, which he recorded ahead of time, in batches. These talks were the basis of the charge of treason leveled against him by the American government after the war. On the day after the American forces landed at Salerno, Pound, aware of what was in store for him, fled north from Rome on foot.

Immediately following the conclusion of World War II, Edmund Wilson, reporting on Rome for the *New Yorker*, painted an ambivalent picture of the city that at once looked back to Hawthorne's and Howells' impressions and ahead to the sensuality and intellectual detachment recorded later by Tennessee Williams, Gore Vidal, John Cheever, and many others. In "Roman Diary: Sketches for a New Piranese," "the whole past of Rome," Wilson stated, "has been pushed by the war into a history that is now finished." He went on to complain of the *raggazzini*, the beggars, Italian politics, Italian poverty, human excrement in the Palatine, and the Forum: "all that irrelevant old rubbish . . . ought to be cleaned up and carted away and the place turned into a nice public park" instead of being allowed to remain "a playground for the Roman poor." On a visit to Café Greco, Wilson picked up a brochure telling him that Goldoni, Canova, Leopardi, Carducci, Berlioz, Corot, Gounod, Bizet, Baudelaire, Byron, Shelley, Thackeray, Liszt, Wagner, Thorswalden, Mark Twain, and others had all patronized the establishment. His attempt to "react appropriately" to this information had, he wrote, "the effect of an emetic and compelled me to disgorge, as it were, the whole mass of lore that I had swallowed before in connection with the genius-haunted past of Rome."

In the story "Roman Fever," Edith Wharton has her Mrs. Blake remark, "I was just thinking, what different things Rome stands for to each generation of travelers. To our own grandmothers, Roman fever; to our mothers, sentimental dangers,—how we used to be guarded!—to our daughters, no more dangers than the middle of Main Street. They don't know it—but how much they're missing!" What Mrs. Wharton could not see was the end of the progression, whereby the worrisome opportunities for sexual experience implied by Hawthorne and James became, in the later 20th century, the principal attraction of Rome, celebrated in the works of Gore Vidal and Tennessee Williams.

Leslie Fiedler, in 1952, published a book of essays, some of which had to do with Rome, whose central theme was that the myth of American innocence had been exploded, or else superseded by reality; certainly, postwar American writers in Rome were anything but innocent. In his first letter to his lover, Donald Windham, Tennessee Williams wrote,

> Honey, you would love Rome! Not Paris, but Rome. The pin-cushions [Williams's expression for youthful male behinds] have been justly celebrated by artists for many centuries and there is nothing I can add to the statements of Michelangelo except a corroberation [sic] in modern times. I have not been to bed with his David but with any number of his more delicate creations, in fact the abundance and accessibility is downright embarrassing.

From the postwar era down to modern times, the Rome experienced, described, and recreated by American writers (when not just another fleshpot) is a grabbag of abstracted, intellectualized, and personalized fragments.

In his story "The Abundant Dreamer," Harold Brodkey referred to "Hollywood on the Tiber," which is what, in the early 60's, Rome had become. Or, as Erik Amfitheatrof, in his wonderful book *The Enchanted Ground: Americans in Italy, 1760-1980*, put it: "Rome was degenerating into the corrupt never-never land that Emerson and other American Puritans had criticized so sharply in the 1850s."

For a period of nearly 250 years, British and American writers—like nonliterary American and British citizens—visiting Rome have always found more or less what they deserved to find. And that, of course, is exactly as it must—and should—be. C

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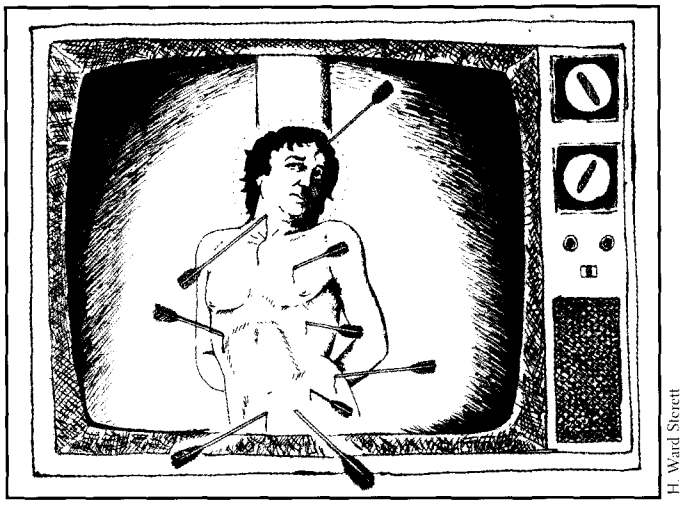
Faith in the Hour of Trial

Lessons From Rome in the Age of Martyrs

by Aaron D. Wolf



H. Ward Sterett

"Behold," said the Lord, "I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." With this statement and by the Testament of His Own Blood, Christ inaugurated the Age of Martyrs—the first 300 years of the Christian era during which, in Jesus's words, "They will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles" (Matthew 10: 17-18).

Christianity had enjoyed an initial status of *religio licita* in the eyes of the Roman government, during the reigns of Tiberius (under which our Lord was crucified), Gaius Caligula, and Claudius. The Romans, as conquerors, largely followed a policy of toleration when it came to conquered peoples and their religious cults, requiring only that their subjects admit the Roman gods—including (eventually) the emperors—into their local pantheons. This bit of ingenuity defused the potential conflict that could result from a forced breech of local tradition. Ancient Judaism (before A.D. 70) was among the sanctioned religions, and Roman officials regarded Christianity as a sect of Judaism.

No Roman citizen had greater hatred for this heretical sect than Saul of Tarsus. Before his conversion, Saul, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter," led the angry mob in Jerusalem against St. Stephen, and, after his conversation, St. Paul's efforts in Asia Minor and Greece helped to "draw a line of demarcation between Christianity and the Judaism of the synagogue." Public hostility toward the new sect stemmed from what Edward Gibbon condescendingly referred to as "the first but arduous duty of a Christian to preserve himself pure and undefiled by the practice of idolatry." In segregating themselves from the rituals of everyday life, gentile Christians become nuisances to their fellow citizens. In addition, their message—their "good news"—demanded the bold proselytization of their pagan neighbors. Ultimately their condemnation of paganism, no matter how discreetly expressed, aroused a public hatred that later made Christians fodder for the Circus. The first expression of this hatred, however, came in the form of rumors about the practices of the Christians, whose Holy Eucharist was misinterpreted as cannibalism.

By the time SS. Peter and Paul were in Rome in the early 60's A.D., public sentiment toward Christians was so negative that the "fiery trial" predicted by St. Peter seemed inevitable. The great fire of Rome in A.D. 64 ignited this ideological powder keg. Contrary to popular belief, the Emperor Nero probably did not set the fire. However, when that rumor began to spread among the public, Nero needed someone to finger. According to Tacitus,

> Nero substituted as culprits and punished with the utmost refinements of cruelty, a class of men loathed for their vices, whom the crowd styled "Christians" . . . First, then, those who confessed themselves Christians were arrested; next, on their disclosures, a vast multitude were convicted, not so much on the charge of arson as for hatred of the human race. And their death was made a matter of sport: they were covered in wild beasts' skins and torn to pieces by dogs; or were fastened to crosses and set fire in order to serve as torches by night when daylight failed.

St. Clement, the bishop of Rome in the 90's, records that it was near this time that St. Peter "went to the place of glory ap-

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Aaron D. Wolf is the assistant editor of Chronicles.

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pointed for him," while St. Paul endured for but a little while longer, before "departing thus from this world." Peter was crucified upside down on Vatican Hill, where his bones now rest—the place where Constantine located his "trophy." St. Paul was beheaded—"poured out like a drink offering"—having "finished the course" and "kept the faith."

The early success of Christianity seems to have caused an increase in persecution. Domitian (A.D. 81-96) smelled insurrection when his cousin, Flavius Clemens, and his wife, Domitilla, refused to burn incense to him and acknowledge his title—*dominus et deus noster*—which he had taken to himself out of jealously for his deified father and brother. This action led to Domitian's identification of Christianity with "atheism"—a charge that would stick throughout the Age of Martyrs. Flavius Clemens—also a consul—was one of many that Domitian executed for "crimes against the state," and Domitilla was exiled.

The greatest of Roman emperors, Trajan, set the first official policy of persecution for Christianity, although during his reign (A.D. 98-117) this policy was only sporadically enforced.

Christianity had become a problem in Bithynia, and the governor Pliny, who was also Trajan's friend, asked for a ruling on different aspects of the problem. Should women and the aged be executed alongside the young men? Should a person's mere embrace of the name "Christian" be enough to warrant a death sentence, or must he be guilty of a legal violation—say, refusing to burn incense to the Roman gods? These were questions only the Augustus could answer.

Trajan's answer was conservative, balancing the law against equity and common sense. "No universal rule," he said, "to be applied to all cases, can be laid down in this matter." Trajan speaks with administrative indifference: "They should not be searched for; but when accused and convicted, they should be punished; yet if any one denies that he has been a Christian, and proves it by action, namely, by worshipping our gods, he is to be pardoned upon his repentance." He goes on to say that anonymous accusations against Christians are to be deemed inadmissible in court because "they are contrary to our age."

One effect of Trajan's ruling was to define the assembly of the Church as an illegal club, one of the forbidden *collegia* or *sodalitas* that threatened imperial solidarity. Churches erected buildings, and Christians enjoyed a certain level of freedom in their worship, but they were subjected to molestation whenever a natural calamity, border strife, or petty bickering occurred. Tertullian, in his *Apologiae*, described this policy as both "lenient and cruel."

The persecutions continued under Hadrian (A.D. 117-138), though with less fanfare and fury. Hadrian seemed to hate Judaism—with which he was more familiar—more than Christianity. In Jerusalem, he built temples of Jupiter and Venus over the site of the Temple and at the place of the Crucifixion. A man of scholarship and reason, Hadrian was the recipient of some of the first Christian apologetic writings—those of Quadratus and Aristides—though it is doubtful he ever read them.

Under his successor, Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138-161), who served as high priest in the Roman temples, the Church of Smyrna and its great bishop, St. John's beloved disciple Polycarp, were persecuted. It was Smyrna that St. John admonished, "Be faithful unto death." When faced with the stake at age 86, he refused to avail himself of clemency: "Eighty and six years have I served Christ, nor has he done me any harm. How, then, should I blaspheme my King who saved me?"

Marcus Aurelius, the Stoic emperor (A.D. 161-180), might have been more sympathetic toward the Christian faith, since the Christians exhibited the muted calm in the face of death that was so prized by the Stoics. However, Fronto, Marcus's tutor, had taught him to despise this bravery, since it was based upon a hope of future personal reward in the heavenly kingdom. The philosopher-emperor believed that Christians were acting irrationally by boldly confessing their faith in the hour of trial. Marcus even issued an edict forbidding the promotion of any philosophy that sought to change the moral actions of individuals based on fear of a deity.

A.D. 166 marks the beginning of the greatest terrors under Marcus Aurelius. It was called an *annus calamitosus*: The Tiber flooded, and there were several earthquakes in the western portion of the empire. Crop failures and plague in Gaul, coupled with raids from barbarians, caused great anxiety, and Marcus allowed his governors to quell the superstitions of their subjects by slaughtering Christians.

In Rome, the greatest of the early apologists, Justin, was beheaded, along with six others, in the year of calamity. His immeasurable contributions to the Church include his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, in which he explains Christ's presence on every page of the Law and Prophets, and the records of his public trial and debate with the cynic Crescens. Standing before the tribunal of Rusticus, he refused to talk his way out of his sentence, saying only that he desired "nothing more than to suffer

The Spring That Was Not Forthcoming

by Constance Rowell Mastores

Although field after field
of white flowers
begin to scatter in the wind,
I cannot say when this spring
began, so quickly it came
and disappeared,

the light still raw, a little blank,
the greens hazy and immaterial,
the chafing squirrel
and fat world of summer
out there somewhere,

but not quite yet;
not quite yet the clamp
of normalcy, the filled-out page.
Here, flutter in the stomach,
self-agony and doubt.

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for the Lord Jesus Christ; for this gives us salvation and joyfulness before his dreadful judgment seat, at which all the world must appear."

Septimius Severus (A.D. 193-211) restored order after the follies of Marcus's son Commodus and the civil wars that followed his murder. Severus issued the first edict that actually forbade conversion to Christianity. Leonidas, the father of Origen, was beheaded as a result of the dissemination of the edict in Alexandria. Tertullian wrote his *Defense of Christianity* in Carthage at about this time, in which he lamented: "If the Tiber rises to the walls or if the Nile fails to rise, straightway the cry arises: 'The Christians to the lions!'"

A quarter-century of peace under Alexander Severus (whose mother was taught by Origen) and Philip the Arab had only been interrupted by the brief reign of Maximin the Thracian, who in a frenzy had executed a handful of clergymen in the vicinity of Rome. During this calm, thousands throughout the empire converted, and popular myths about cannibalistic, seditious Christians began to fade. However, the great tribulation was at hand, as barbarians from the north and Persians from the east would force the emperors in Rome to make every effort imaginable to preserve unity. This included a vigorous return to the Roman pagan religion—an attempt to mend the ideological seams of the once-great empire. The result, ultimately, was the triumph of Christianity as the unifying ideology that would *replace* paganism.

The great tribulation came in three waves under three soldier-emperors: Decius, Valerian, and Diocletian. Despite their zeal for empire, they were not megalomaniacal, as was Domitian, or criminally insane, as was Nero. They were simply trying to recover the glory that was once Rome.

Under Decius, the first wave poured out of Rome like a torrent in the year 250, when he issued his edict to the governors to persecute all who would not burn incense to the Roman gods. He ordered the bishops killed and peasants placed on trials. Standing before the magistrate, these fearful converts could sign certificates called *libelli* that certified their renunciation of Jesus Christ and bore witness to an act of idolatry—the burning of incense to Decius. The Church was faced with the challenge of excommunicating these *lapsi*, then dealing with those who later repented and sought reinstatement.

The political dimension of the persecution came even more pronounced in the reign of Valerian (253-260), who was persuaded that the Christians were treasonous conspirators in league with the Persians. In 257, upon news of the Persian invasion of Syrian Antioch (long a stronghold of the Church), he issued an edict forbidding Christians to meet for worship or visit their cemeteries throughout the empire. Many Christians in Rome fled "to the hollows" (*ad catacumbas*) near the church of St. Sebastian on the Appian Way. Here, they buried their dead in the famous underground tunnels.

Another edict of Valerian, issued in 258, demanded the execution of any man convicted of being a Christian priest, degraded a Christian senator or soldier from his rank, and forced others into exile—often to the war-torn fringes of the empire. Cyprian of Carthage and Pope Sixtus II were executed immediately.

The imprisonment of Valerian on the Persian battlefront in 259 marked the beginning of four decades of peace and prosperity for the Church, during which a few great houses of worship were built and many more came to the faith. But the increased threat of massive foreign invasion led to the greatest of all persecutions, the last of the Age of Martyrs, under Diocletian.

Diocletian spent his reign defending the empire from foreign enemies and attempting to reestablish unity within its borders. Christianity, which was both divisive and transnational, appeared an obstacle to his efforts. For 20 years, there had been no need to carry out the policies of Decius—until 303, when war with the Persians threatened afresh. Galerius had become violently anti-Christian, believing his wife's Christianity (as well as that of Diocletian's wife) to be a stain of dishonor on the imperial family. On February 23, 303 (the feast of *Terminalia*), he convinced his father-in-law to order the destruction of all Christian meetinghouses throughout the empire. The clergy were arrested, and the Scriptures were burned. Then, in 304, the policy of Decius was reinstated: All throughout the empire—including Diocletian's wife and daughter—would have to burn incense to the Roman gods or be put to death.

The most severe persecution was enacted under the auspices of Galerius and Maximin, and soldiers were instructed to force the children of those on trial for Christianity to eat sacrifices made to Diocletian. Thousands were crucified, put to the rack, thrown before beasts, or beheaded. Eusebius described with horror his presbyters being "torn to pieces" in the amphitheater in Caesarea. Toward the end of the great tribulation, he observed the weariness of the Romans: "The bloody swords became dull and shattered; the executioners grew weary, and had to relieve each other; but the Christians sang hymns of praise and thanksgiving in honor of Almighty God, even to their last breath."

The Age of Martyrs came to an end under the sign of the Cross in 311. Many downplay the era, saying no more than 3,000 wore the crown of life during these 300 bitter years. Gibbon, for one, mocks the austerity of the Christians of whom St. John said, "They loved not their lives unto death." Others bristle at the legendary embellishments of some of the martyrologies. Modern historians sympathize with the sanity of Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, Decius, and Diocletian: These were noble Romans who sought to preserve their kingdom.

So what are we to make of the martyrs and their age? They, too, have a kingdom—an unshakable kingdom that is "not of this world." Theirs is the crown of life, and though they cry out, "How long, O Lord, before you avenge us," theirs is the beatific vision.

Still, one might ask, would burning some incense and reciting a meaningless oath have jeopardized that? Would it not be better to live longer, to remain with one's family instead of depriving them of a father, a mother, a son, or a daughter? The possibility of personal glory and the promise of perpetual memory aside, the martyrs were singularly focused on the word of their Savior and the promise of eternal life:

> Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

They knew the word of their Lord, and for them, there was no other option but to confess His Name in the hour of trial. When the persecutions are renewed, how many of us will follow their example?

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Roman Spies and Spies in Rome

by Srdja Trifkovic

H. Ward Sterett

In the summer of 1943, as Allied forces reached Italy, U.S. Army counterintelligence warned GIs, "You are no longer in Kansas City, San Francisco, or Ada, Oklahoma, but in a European country where espionage has been second nature to the population for centuries."

That "second nature" extends all the way back to early Rome and its rise—in the space of six or seven generations—from rural obscurity to the ancient equivalent of benevolent global hegemony. While the Roman legions were the most efficient and disciplined troops of the premodern age, their battles would have been more difficult without their elaborate intelligence network. Many Romans proved to be even more adept at spying on each other; by the end of the Republican era, Rome was a hotbed of intrigue, conspiracy, and subterfuge.

It all started (as Livy tells us) around 300 B.C., during the Etruscan wars, when a brother of the consul Fabius Maximus went into the Ciminian forest dressed as an Etruscan. Fluent in the language of Rome's enemies, he was able to penetrate areas previously inaccessible to Romans and to woo the local Umbrians to support the Roman cause. Livy describes the efforts of Carthaginian agents, fluent in Latin, who were all over the Roman rear, equipped with secret gestures to recognize one another and who used forged documents and planted false information to trap the Romans. The Romans responded with such stratagems as dressing up a centurion as a slave and inflicting a caning to give him cover.

Rome seemed a mighty monolith to the outside world after Carthage was razed, but rivalry and jealousy within its ruling class caused Livius Drusus's architect to ask if he should build Drusus's house "so that it be free from public gaze, safe from all espionage, and that nobody could look down on it." Knowing your competitors was any public figure's key to survival and advancement in the decades preceding Augustus. This required the creation of private intelligence networks of friends and family, slaves, and paid agents of both sexes. It was not only Cicero's oratory and determination but his private network that saved the Republic from Cataline, and Pompey and Caesar used their networks against each other in the civil war that finally brought it down. But the danger that it might fall into the hands of a rival faction made Roman leaders wary of creating a centralized intelligence agency.

That was no way to run an empire, however, and half a century later, Augustus established postal and messenger service (*cursus publicus*), a permanent and reliable means of communication—though it had its imperfections: Codes and security classification of communications were not developed until later. The imperfections could be fatal: Caracalla's commander in Rome sent a message to the emperor in the field that his aide Macrinus was plotting against him. The warning, however, was sent in a sealed letter through the imperial post. The courier was not informed of the importance of the message; upon receiving the mail, Caracalla gave it to Macrinus to read and to report if there was something of interest—thus sealing his fate.

By the end of the first century A.D., a full-time intelligence and security service was in place. Drawn from the ranks of the legions' quartermaster staff (the *frumentarii*), they also spied on their superiors, the imperial bureaucracy, and the local population, and reported to Rome. They doubled as couriers, tax collectors, and state security officers. By the third century, they were spying on distant governors and generals, on humble Christians and haughty senators alike, and eventually their job description included assassination. Romans and provincials could no longer speak freely, and abuses grew intolerable.

Diocletian eventually replaced the *frumentarii* with the blandly named *agentes in rebus* or "general agents." Civilian hoods proved even worse than military ones, and they often col-

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Srdja Trifkovic is the foreign-affairs editor for Chronicles.

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luded with the officials who could pay them off or promote their careers. Upright citizens could be falsely accused of treason, while real plotters remained unhindered.

For centuries after the Goth "immigration," Rome declined in size and importance. Throughout medieval times, rivals for the papacy and Roman noble families employed cloak-and-dagger techniques against each other, but the first figure of James Bond's caliber is Cardinal Alessandro Albani (1692-1779), known as England's spy in the Vatican.

A cultivated man whose passion for classical antiquities made him one of the outstanding collectors in Europe, Albani established a lifelong friendship with Philip von Stosch, a celebrated art collector. Stosch was a spy for the English government, which was anxious to learn the plots hatched in the court of James III, the "Old Pretender" to the British throne. James had taken refuge in Rome, holding court in exile under papal protection. Stosch recruited Albani to obtain information on the Old Pretender's court and the activities of visiting Jacobites.

At first, the cardinal was reluctant to betray Pope Benedict and to undermine his allegiance to the Stuarts. Vanity and ambition intervened when Benedict, heeding warnings that Albani was not to be trusted, denied him the post of prefect of the signature. Those warnings became a self-fulfilling prophecy: Albani became a willing spy for the English.

Albani often met with wealthy English collectors, who furnished him with an additional source of information on the underground activities of the Jacobites. He established a network of spies that, in 1744, reported that James' son, Bonnie Prince Charlie, was gathering troops to invade his ancestral land. The cardinal informed the English, who were ready when the prince landed in Scotland in 1745. With the Jacobite cause lost, Albani rose in power and, in concert with the English, was able to persuade the Vatican to revoke its recognition of the House of Stuart.

The Vatican has been a major point of interest for foreign spies ever since. Nazi Germany considered the Catholic Church a threat to its domestic security and its international ambitions. In Germany, Hitler's agents successfully recruited informants to provide intelligence on Church finances and the political views and activities of bishops, priests, and lay Catholics. In Rome, however, German attempts to penetrate the papacy were less effective, though the German code-breaking operation was successful: The Nazis systematically intercepted, decoded, and read secret communications between the pope and his representatives worldwide.

One of the most interesting espionage operations in World War II-era Rome was the so-called "ratlines" network that provided forged passports, shelter, money, and transport for thousands of fugitive Nazis and their collaborators fleeing Europe. This highly secretive operation was negotiated between Allen Dulles—then senior wartime OSS officer in Switzerland, later to become director of the CIA—and SS Gen. Karl Wolff. This worldly, debonair, and well-connected SS officer—not at all your Hollywood German—commanded the SS and Gestapo contingents in Italy. By the summer of 1944, he could see the writing on the wall. The result was an agreement affording amnesty to SS and related personnel in exchange for their promised support of the West in the anticipated Cold War.

As British and U.S. intelligence officials scoured Europe, seeking to apprehend Nazis wanted on war-crimes charges, their colleagues were helping them escape. Some 30,000 men found sanctuary (mostly in South America), including some distinctly nasty characters: Klaus Barbie, Eugen Kvaternik, Franz Stangl, Ante Pavelic, Adolf Eichmann, Andrija Artukovic, and Josef Mengele.

Funding for this operation came largely from gold and other liquid assets looted by the Nazis' Croatian collaborators, the Ustashi, from their hundreds of thousands of Serbian and Jewish victims. The key Roman institution providing logistical support for the operation was the Croatian-run Institute of St. Jerome—a hotbed of atavistic ethnic hatred hiding behind the façade of a religious institution. It brought discredit and embarrassment to the Vatican with its freelance operations from 1945 to 1947.

A report released by the U.S. State Department in 1998 provides conclusive evidence that Swiss banks were not the only facilities used to channel looted funds. Relying on recently declassified U.S. government documents, it identified the Vatican's financial institutions as a key postwar repository used by the Ustashi.

The Vatican denied the accusations when they first surfaced in the summer of 1997: "There is no basis in reality to the reports," said Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls. They were based on anonymous sources "whose reliability is more than dubious." But two weeks later, the Associated Press reported that this denial was contradicted by an internal U.S. Treasury Department memorandum that had been sealed for 50 years. "Approximately 200 million Swiss francs was originally held in the Vatican for safekeeping," says the October 21, 1946, memo from Treasury agent Emerson Bigelow to the director of monetary research. Other documents, declassified on the last day of 1996 (under the 50-year rule), established that Bigelow had received confirmation from the OSS that a considerable portion of the Ustasha money was sent to Spain and Argentina through the "pipeline."

But there was one American intelligence operative in Rome who did not want to let the cat out of the bag. In 1944, James Jesus Angleton, a 26-year-old second lieutenant in the X-2 counterespionage branch of the OSS, arrived in Italy. He had spent the better part of his adolescence there, spoke the language fluently, and understood its culture and institutions. Angleton proved an adept field operative, hunting down agents left behind by the retreating Germans. His rise to the top of all American secret activity in Italy paralleled a remarkable expansion of U.S. intelligence capabilities.

By the end of 1946, Angleton had recruited over 50 informants and penetrated seven foreign intelligence services, including Tito's OZNA, the French *Service de Documentation Exterieure et de Contreespionage*, and the Italian agencies. The professional skills of the man who would come to dominate American counterespionage for a generation—for good and ill—were honed in Italy.

Angleton's network was as inexpensive as it was productive. He reported in late 1945 that he did not pay for anything that he received from the Italian Intelligence Service. By giving them some cigarettes or other cheap goods, he could gratify his Italian counterparts without humiliating them. As Angleton wrote in one of his general reports: "A few such items represent the equivalent of a month's pay to an Italian Intelligence officer. In practice, $500 worth of operational supplies has the operational value of $50,000 worth or more. This method of payment is generally in use by other intelligence services."

Angleton sought key informants not among conservative traditionalists but among anti-monarchist Italian political radicals

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or former fascists. The passionate debate over the future of the monarchy in Italy, which followed the defeat of Nazi Germany and the Fascist Republic in Northern Italy, affected the Italian Royal Navy, which Angleton himself described as "the stronghold of Monarchism." Angered by the militant monarchism of his superiors, a young republican in the naval intelligence section took matters into his own hands and, from the summer of 1945, supplied Americans with Italian secrets, strengthening Angleton's ability to monitor Italian efforts to rebuild an intelligence capability.

This was the time when the first director of the CIA, Allen Dulles, conceived Operation Stay Behind. The idea was to build throughout Western Europe a secret network of guerrillas who could fight behind the lines in the event of a Soviet invasion. The plan was later codified under the auspices of the Clandestine Coordinating Committee of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, the military arm of NATO. This was the seed that grew into Operation Gladio in 1956. The name derived from the short sword (*gladius*) used by Roman legionnaires. The Gladio network was initially funded by the CIA. Apparently unknown to the Italian government, 622 Italian citizens were recruited and trained by U.S. and British specialists in Sardinia.

Up to 15,000 people were ultimately recruited to the Gladio network. By the 1970's, with the prospect of a Soviet invasion receding, some of its members (especially its senior officers) seem to have turned rogue and actively fomented political destabilization plots, surreptitiously encouraging and even facilitating a series of terrorist attacks.

Throughout the Cold War, the Soviets had an invaluable pool of collaborators in Italy: a large, well-organized, and disciplined Communist Party. The extent of the KGB's activities only became fully apparent in recent years, notably with the publication of the so-called Mitrokhin dossier on the KGB's espionage activities. But while the report named names from Italian political, social, and media life, it merely lists Soviet activities in the Vatican—without giving us a clue whether recruitment attempts were successful. After the Polish pope was elected in 1979, the report states:

> The central office has assigned the KGB in Rome the priority task of penetrating Vatican objectives, especially at the present moment, when the Western special services are constantly attempting to use the Catholic Church for anti-Soviet and anti-Socialist ends. A special section of the plan was dedicated to the study and cultivation of support staff in Vatican institutions with direct access to secret records. It was a difficult undertaking, given the atmosphere of distrust and suspicion that prevailed, as well as the hostility of the media and religious fanaticism of some individuals . . . It was not necessary to find a direct contact. It was necessary to find and acquire support agents who could cultivate Vatican personnel under false pretenses. This type of employee was poorly paid; the material factor did not play an insignificant part. Within this category, one could come across those who were closed from the point of view of ideology and who, because of the work itself, addressed negative aspects with Vatican chiefs, such as corruption, lack of honesty, immoral conduct, and individuals who were totally disillusioned with the ideals and ideas of Catholicism.

The KGB's central office pointed out concrete strategic places within the Vatican establishment, singling out interpreters working in the Secretariat of State and in the Church's Council of Public Affairs: "Such individuals could be contacted through ads in which, as members of a category that was poorly remunerated, they offered their own services as teachers, translators, etc." Interestingly, the report does not indicate subsequent success in its attempts to infiltrate the Vatican. A list has been published, however, of Italian politicians, journalists, and other personalities who were paid by the KGB.

By far the most intriguing Roman cloak-and-dagger affair in modern times started unraveling in London in the early morning hours of Friday, June 18, 1982, when the body of a stocky, middle-aged man was found dangling from an orange rope underneath Blackfriars Bridge. A passport identified him as Gian Roberto Calvini, but the dead man was really Roberto Calvi, chairman and managing director of the Banco Ambrosiano. Calvi had mysteriously vanished from Rome a week earlier, and his spectacular end in London reignited media curiosity over a story that had already made headlines, reverberating through the world's major financial and political institutions. Calvi was only one of a cast of characters that included organized-crime interests, political groups, secret societies, drug dealers, major financial institutions, and—perhaps most stunning of all—the Institute for Religious Works, the official bank of the Vatican.

The circumstances of Calvi's death led knowledgeable observers to suspect a Masonic ritual slaying. With his hands tied behind his back and a brick thrust into his coat pocket, Calvi had been strangled, apparently by the rope that had been noosed around his neck. The location itself was symbolic: Blackfriars Bridge sits astride the border that connects the masonically named "Square Mile" of the City (the financial district of London) to the rest of London. The initial inquest into his death returned a verdict of suicide. Suspicious of the Masonic affiliations of the City police, Calvi's family called for a second, more thorough inquest, which belatedly returned an open verdict. Meanwhile, Banco Ambrosiano, Calvi's privately owned bank, collapsed on the news of his death, revealing a $1.3 billion deficit in the balance sheet. A large portion of the missing money was later traced to accounts owned by the Vatican bank.

Calvi was connected to the secret Masonic lodge P2, an organization headed by Licio Gelli, known as the "Puppet Master." By 1974, P2 had more than 1,000 members, including four Italian cabinet ministers, three intelligence chiefs, 160 senior military officers, 48 MPs, the chief of staff of the Italian Army, and top diplomats, bankers, industrialists, and media publishers. But Gelli needed more funds to spread his network. He turned to Calvi, who headed the largest non-state-owned bank in Italy. Calvi began to siphon money illegally from his bank, using the Vatican bank to channel it. As a result of blackmail or ideological commitment, Calvi continued to funnel vast amounts to Gelli and P2, bankrupting his bank in the process.

The story gets even more interesting—and murky—from this point on, including possible ties to the sudden death of Pope John Paul I, Mafia links, and secret societies. Which version of events is true is anyone's guess. Roman espionage has been around for over two millennia of recorded history, and by now the spies have learned how to cover their tracks more successfully than in the days of Fabius Maximus.

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English Tracts

by Derek Turner

"England, with all thy faults, I love thee still."
—William Cowper, *The Task, II*

The English: A Portrait of a People
by Jeremy Paxman
London: Penguin; 309 pp., £7.99

England—An Elegy
by Roger Scruton
London: Chatto & Windus; 270 pp., £16.99

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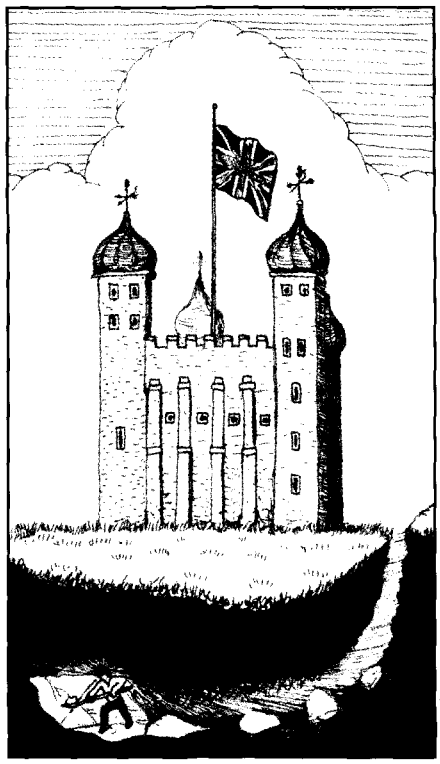
For the last 300 years, "England" and "Britain" have been largely synonymous. When Glasgow-born General Sir John Moore lay dying at Corunna, his last words were "I hope the people of England will be satisfied. I hope my country will do me justice." Meanwhile, Nelson's "England Expects . . . " signal is supposed to have been hoisted by a Scottish signaller.

But the specifically English component of the British body politic was bound eventually to obtrude itself into the public eye as governmental policies weakened the links between the constituent parts of Britain. Devolution has given Scottish and Welsh MPs the right to vote on matters concerning England, but not the other way around. The blatant injustice of this "West Lothian Question" understandably annoys many English people. Meanwhile, Northern Ireland is also being edged out of the United Kingdom, thanks to the postcolonial expedient of turning insurrectionists into government ministers. The 200th anniversary of the Act of Union passed in January 2001 without any government recognition.



H. Ward Sterett

Other factors are increasing English self-awareness. The government is steadily giving greater powers to its beloved E.U. bureaucrats, who envisage dividing England into nine regions, while leaving Scotland and Wales as single entities. Between 150,000 and 175,000 non-E.U. immigrants (virtually all of whom will end up in English cities) are expected to enter Britain every year until 2005. The empire has evaporated. All British institutions are now officially "institutionally racist," and the government-commissioned Parekh Report states that British history needs to be "jettisoned." On top of these specific problems, such universal tendencies as globalization and advances in communications potentially endanger *all* identities and cultures. Small wonder that some English people are beginning to worry about their communal future.

This concern has not yet manifested itself politically, perhaps because of our electoral system. But an ever-greater number of newspaper articles, television programs, and academic texts are concerned with the nature and future of the country Emerson called "Mother of nations, mother of heroes."

For different reasons, both left and right want to keep a lid on intestinal Englishness. Leftists say that, if England exists at all, it should be suppressed in the interests of "anti-racism," while right-wingers attempt to discourage English consciousness in the interests of preserving British unity. But a sense of English uniqueness and embattlement has already become more widespread. This was demonstrated forcibly during the last European Cup, when even middle-class people felt empathy toward the English football team. Today, Londoners see hundreds of St. George's Cross bumper stickers on London's black cabs. As Jeremy Paxman says in *The English*: "Something is stirring out there."

Jeremy Paxman's and Roger Scruton's books are important and entertaining contributions to this swelling debate. Each is an excellent example of one of the two main schools of comment about England—the demystifying and the remystifying, respectively.

Paxman is a waspish BBC television

Derek Turner is the editor of Right NOW!, *published in London.*

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presenter who has hosted such flagship programs as *Newsnight* and *University Challenge*. Famous for his acerbity with politicians, he now wields his cynical talent against the English, whom he admires for their tolerance, individualism, sense of fair play, and "cussedness," but whose illusions he seeks to examine and undermine.

His tone is part supercilious, part affectionate. Like his television persona, *The English* is often dismissive of Englishness to the point of rudeness, but there is no real malice in this: Parts of Paxman's book may be written more for effect than because the author means it. In one memorable passage, Paxman dismisses Morris dancing as "a clumsy pub sport practiced by men in beards and shiny-bottomed trousers." But, then, all folk dances are naive, the "clumsy pub sports" of perhaps unsophisticated but decent people who dance for fun and to make an innocent statement about their identity. Would he have been so cutting about an African folk dance?

There are also little bursts of incongruous enthusiasm, such as his belief that one of the good things about England is "a higher overall standard of television than anywhere else in the world." But his championing of such dismal fare could be an expression of cynical self-interest, too. On immigration, Paxman waxes girlish: "The arrival of substantial numbers of immigrants from other cultures has forced the English to break out of their complacency, to re-examine themselves, and to recognize and exult in diversity." Such exultation, however, does not abound in England's inner cities.

Paxman nonetheless writes easily and amusingly, and makes many astute observations. He sums up well the advance of the service economy by saying that Britain is now less Napoleon's "*une nation de boutiquiers*" than "a nation of checkout-operators." His contrast between the exemplary marriage of the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh and those of their children and in-laws is telling. In some respects, Paxman's criticisms echo those of such conservatives as Roger Scruton and Peter Hitchens. And he is quite right to say that it is difficult to define Englishness.

But ultimately, Paxman is not on the side of the Angles. His mission is to pour scorn upon any notion that the English might have a common future, although he is vague about what might succeed it—presumably some form of civic society based on reason and *faux* good manners governed by political correctness. The mere fact, however, that English people may not have all that much in common does not necessarily mean that they will not think and act together. Patriotism depends not on logic or consistency but on irrational affinities based on myths. Paxman does not seem to comprehend this; believing himself rational, he acts as if all human beings are—or should be—rational. He admits that, during England's last patriotic flowering (World War II), relatively few of those who sang "There'll always be an England, / While there's a country lane, / Wherever there's a cottage small / Beside a field of grain" as they marched to war would have lived in such cottages. Yet slum dwellers from Preston, train guards from Swindon, and ne'er-do-wells from Stepney were united by their dream of Englishness.

Rather lovely, we might think, but to Paxman "the idea that England is a garden" is "not so much like a perennial flower as some peculiarly invasive weed." To him, the cardinal sin is "hypocrisy" and all relationships should be based on individual choice, so such fond delusions must be extirpated with intellectual weedkiller. But in an often sordid world, why should such pleasant delusions not be allowed to persist? They may anyway, despite the attentions of the *nil admirari* brigade. In spite of their famed national stolidity, as portrayed in such films as *In Which We Serve* or *Brief Encounter*, the English are as prone to magic as any other people.

The essentially magical quality of England is recognized by Roger Scruton, who—unlike Paxman—is a romantic. Where Paxman demystifies, Scruton seeks to remystify. This is a more difficult—and socially beneficial—task. In the circumstances, a little overstatement is acceptable.

Words like "enchantment," "mystery," and "magic" recur often in *England—An Elegy*, in such lines as "The English Crown—the mysterious corporation sole which is also the supreme fiction in this fairy tale" and "The disquiet over immigration was the result, it seems to me, not of racism, but of the disruption of an old experience of home, and a loss of the enchantment which made home a place of safety and consolation." (The latter sentiment attracted the epithet "offensive" from a hypersensitive *Daily Telegraph* reviewer.) Such words might seem a means of avoiding precision, but the author knows that he is dealing with human beings, not machines.

Secondhand bookshops are full of the dusty—but fragrant—tomes of such patriotic writers as H.J. Massingham, H.V. Morton, and D.H. Lawrence (and imprints like Batsford and the Homeland Association), but today, Roger Scruton is virtually unique in praising England. For that reason alone, he deserves unstinting support. Still, reading *England—An Elegy* is not a duty but an unmitigated pleasure.

Like Paxman, Scruton examines England's binding myths—but positively, with a view to comprehending what is being lost. He knows that "Often it seems that we kill things by examining them." Other critics examine such intangibles to establish that it was all a "construct" and that they are intellectually superior to the benighted proles who believe in such things.

Scruton admits the difficulties of describing the English polity: "The English enjoyed the strange privilege of knowing exactly *who* they were, but not *what* they were." Aided by Providence, which considerately placed a moat around England and so helped avert invasion, the island, he says, came to be regarded simply as "home"—a place of retreat and repose, where at least some Englishmen could indulge their chosen eccentricities, free from interference. Later, the English began to think of themselves as members of a nation, but such abstractions were modified by Romanesque notions of the primacy of the homeland (rather than of the race), love of local landscapes, and a fondness for homegrown customs and institutions. These were generally not examined too critically, because "Things at home don't need an explanation. They are there because they are there."

Even the radicals who sought to overthrow England were part of a domestic continuum,

> a chafing away from inside which created the comfortable impression that England itself was impregnable, since its quarrels were purely internal . . . however furious these quarrels, the prevailing belief was that a solution could always be found to them, since common sense and compromise were the norms of English politics.

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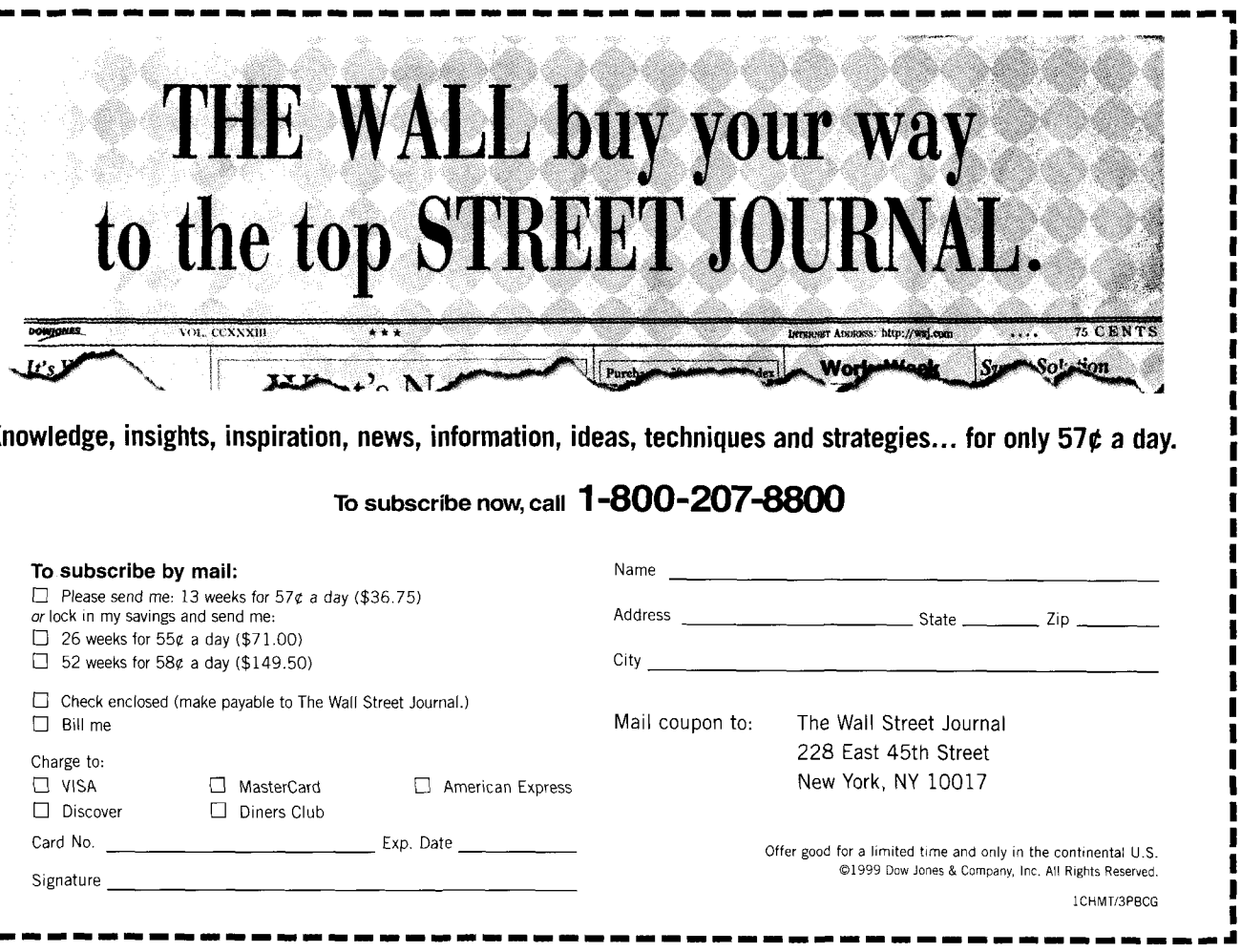
He may be overstating the case: If the Puritans did not do as much damage as they might have done, it was not for want of trying.

But such sallies are made consciously; Scruton is perfectly aware of the chasm between principle and practice. For example, even in the midst of rhapsodizing about Anglicanism—"robed choir boys sang in procession, leading the Rev Vaughan-Wilkes to the altar in his flowing chasuble like cherubs drawing some airborne god"—he acknowledges that, as early as 1851, only half of English people regularly attended Anglican services, declining to 25 percent in some urban districts.

Perhaps most important among England's customs and institutions is the common law, which, Scruton says, was "understood from the beginning to be the *law of the land*. That is, it belonged to *England*, and not to any resident." He believes it was the real or perceived protection offered by the common law that allowed individualism, one of the salient English characteristics, to flourish. He also identifies the central importance of clubs and societies to the English, and the relative unimportance of the state until very recent times—a useful reminder of the essentially revolutionary nature of the welfare state and of state education. With unremitting enthusiasm, he goes on to deal with every possible aspect of England—religion, government, class, schools, the countryside, the weather, the "Square Mile," imperial measurements, money, country houses, and so on, in a panoply of poetically expressed and philosophically comprehended English images. But his book is also an autobiography, since Scruton believes that his generation (he was born in 1944) was the last to know the real England. Within his autobiography, there is an unforgettable portrait of his father, an old socialist whose outlook was less that of Tony Blair than of such patriotic communalists as William Cobbett, William Morris, or Richard Jefferies, who believed that patriotism was best expressed by taking care of the common people—a viewpoint eminently English in its combination of romance and pragmatism.

England—An Elegy needs to be read by everyone who wishes to understand England. But it has one serious failing: As the book's title makes plain, it is a lament for the dead, while the English really need a call to arms. Scruton claims that he wants "to praise the dead and to cheer the survivors"; I believe that he succeeds superlatively in the first objective, but fails in the second. Like too many conservatives, he revels in pessimism and an overweening love of lost causes—the more lost, the more strongly cleaved to. His poignant exposition may have the unfortunate effect of demoralizing some who share his aspirations but have not yet given up. Frankly, even if England *is* finished, conservative-minded people ought to act as if it were not. Standing and dying around a revered corpse is fine and noble, but how much more sensible and *English* to fight to preserve a living thing!

Yet perhaps, as Scruton says in his preface, "understanding is a way to keep what we value, when all other means have vanished." Perhaps his wistful evocation may actually encourage less articulate patriots to fight more assiduously, because they will have a clearer idea of what they are fighting *for*.



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Collision Course

by Thomas Fleming

Pio IX
by Roberto de Mattei
Casale Monferrato: Piemme;
253 pp., £30

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The polemics engendered by the beatification of Pope Pius IX are unlikely to go away. When all the false charges of antisemitism are set aside, the fact remains that this one man may have done more to stem the tide of liberalism than all the great English and American conservatives of the past two centuries put together, and the new biography (more of an apologia, really) by Prof. Roberto de Mattei has had the remarkable effect of establishing the context for this great man's career.

And he was a great man, who stood like the Archangel Michael before the gates of hell, saying "no" to the social and political heresies of the 19th century (they were also the heresies of the 20th) and smiting hip and thigh all the domestic enemies of Christendom: modernists and liberals, laicizing Catholic nationalists and Christian socialists, and all the weaklings who even then were willing to compromise with the enemy.

By one of the quirks of history, the Pope who stood in the way of Italian unity was also one of the most unusual geniuses of the 19th century. Born into an aristocratic family in 1792, Giovanni Mastai Ferretti was, despite his epilepsy, a brilliant student of the classics. He was encouraged by his mother to study for the priesthood, but he was ordained with the provision that, because of his condition, he was not allowed to say Mass without an assistant. Once he became a priest, the malady went away.

As archbishop of Spoleto, he became known for his humane sentiments and interceded, during the uprising of 1831, between Italian rebels and the Austrian commander. Despite a few minor adventures (such as a stint in Chile), he led a comparatively uneventful life until 1846, when the College of Cardinals quickly (on the fourth scrutiny) settled on him as the successor to the uncompromising reactionary, Pope Gregory XVI. The election of Pius IX was regarded as a liberal victory, especially after Cardinal Gaysbruch arrived too late from Milan to convey the Austrian veto.

As Prof. de Mattei makes clear in this lucid account of Pio Nono's contributions to the Church, many Italian liberals (such as Vincenzo Gioberti) believed that their movement would only triumph if they succeeded in putting a liberal onto the throne of St. Peter. In Pius IX, they believed they had their man.

A kind and humane man, Pius IX had expressed sympathy for the sufferings endured by Italian liberals and rebels, and in his first years in the papal chair, he made careful steps toward reform: He amnestied political prisoners, took laymen into his cabinet, and even gave some support to the Milanese rebels in 1848. Liberals were already disturbed, however, by his encyclical of 1846 in which he complains of the persecution of Catholic interests and expresses clear opposition to liberal principles and to the plots of the secret societies.

Today in America, the phrase "secret societies" is an invitation to mockery, but in the 19th century, the Freemasons and Illuminists were no laughing matter, as the sober Librarian of Congress, James Billington, made clear in *Fire in the Minds of Men*. These secret societies represented a virulent strain of liberalism that defined itself largely by what it hated: the moral, social, and cultural traditions of Christianity. Even before the French Revolution, they had formed secret societies to undermine society and morality. One key figure (cited by Prof. de Mattei) was Filippo Buonarotti, a disciple of the savage Robespierre who returned to Italy to organize a conspiracy he named *Sublimi Maestri Perfetti*.

The young Pope believed that he could embrace the best tendencies of liberalism without compromising the Church's inheritance. Austria's cynical prime minister was, perhaps, wiser. Prince Metternich opposed the Pope's political amnesty; hearing of Pius's reforms, he declared: "A liberal pope is not a possible being." Metternich was aghast when he learned that the Vatican's prudent secretary of state (Cardinal Gizzi) had resigned in protest over the Pope's willingness to set up a civil guard of armed citizens. Commenting on the situation, Metternich said that the events were nothing less than "a revolution under the disguise of reforms."

Although the Pope was hailed throughout Italy as a savior and contrasted everywhere with the kings of Piedmont and Naples, the collision was inevitable. As de Mattei demonstrates in his refutation of "the myth of the liberal Pio Nono," Pius IX was no liberal of any kind. In fact, the Pope understood better than anyone in the 19th century what the theological and moral inheritance of the Church meant to mankind, and however much he might wish to reform his government, he had no illusions about democracy or about the religion of liberalism that was being created in France, England, and the United States.

After considering an expedition in 1848 to protect the Milanesi from Austrian troops, he refused to join the war, alleging both the very real threat of a German schism if the Church took a national side in the war and arguing the Church's commitment to peace. The foreseeable result was an immediate reversal of "public opinion" (which meant then what it means now, the support of indoctrinated liberals) and a virtual rebellion against the Pope.

When the Pope sent a message to the emperor, asking him to grant the Italians their freedom, the emperor responded with contempt. In one brief period, the Pope lost the support of Austria and alienated the Italian nationalists. The moderate-liberal government he had allowed to form in Rome—under attack from secret societies and rabble-rousers—collapsed in bickerings and rhetorical frenzy. When Pius appointed a responsible and energetic moderate-liberal—Pellegrino Rossi—to head the government, the poor man was assassinated and the Roman rabble treated this despicable murder as an act of patriotism.

The only question for Pius IX was not *if* or *when* to flee, but *where*. Although he took refuge in the reactionary Kingdom of Naples, he preserved his independence by refusing to accept the king's hospitality. Back in Rome, Garibaldi showed up to lead the military campaign against the inevitable attack, and Mazzini arrived and made himself a virtual dictator. Mazzini's real character was revealed in those days, as he attempted to

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coopt Catholic rituals. On Easter, a renegade priest served "Mass" in a mock Catholic ceremony in St. Peter's, complete with republican symbols. Instead of the Pope, Mazzini appeared on the balcony beside the priest. Mazzini's government fined the canons of the cathedral who refused to take part in the blasphemy.

In later years, Pope Pius IX—still an humane reformer—watched as the Piedmontese Kingdom of Italy swallowed up the Papal States. In response to this spoliation and vandalism—which put Victor Emmanuel's ministers in the same category with Thomas Cromwell and Robespierre—most good Italian Catholics acquiesced, but they refused to participate in politics until Mussolini signed a concordat with the Church (an arrangement now under attack by Italian leftists), giving independence to the Vatican.

Although Pius IX has been severely criticized both for his political mistakes and for his reactionary principles, his intransigence may have saved the Catholic Church. On his election, many European liberals were confidently predicting that he would be the last Pope, because the Church was on the point of extinction. While it might be an exaggeration to say that Pius IX singlehandedly rescued the Church, it is only fair to acknowledge that he was the instrument. It is to be hoped that this and other works of Roberto de Mattei will soon be put into print by an American publisher.

Thomas Fleming is the editor of Chronicles *and the president of The Rockford Institute.*

Fighting the Big War

by Joseph E. Fallon

My Life as a Jarhead: USMC 1941-45
by Ralph Walker Willis
Tucson: Patrice Press;
120 pp., $9.95

◆

"What did you do in the big war?" his grandchildren asked. Ralph Walker Willis has answered them in *My Life as a Jarhead: USMC 1941-45*, a valuable book for anyone interested in the subjects of history and heroism. His is not the memoir of a politician or military officer, nor a polished work of self-promotion penned by a ghostwriter. This is the raw and gripping story of an American boy who enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps ten days after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and chronicled his experiences during four years of war in the Pacific—including the Battle of Iwo Jima and the U.S. occupation of Japan.

My Life as a Jarhead is the antidote to Tom Brokaw's highly publicized *The Greatest Generation*, which includes World War II recollections of ordinary and famous Americans as a marketing device. Ignoring standards of scholarly research and even of journalistic integrity, *The Greatest Generation* portrays Americans who grew up in the Depression and then won World War II—as well as their society and government—as shamefully racist, particularly in regard to Japanese-Americans. Today, more than ever before, the dominant news media do not report the news; they manufacture it, recreating the past—as Brokaw attempted to do—so that history, too, may conform to their prejudices.

Mr. Willis is an excellent observer who uses words as a painter uses paint to create powerful images of his experiences. He writes honestly about World War II, the Japanese, and U.S. military bureaucracies. He began his hitch in the Marine Corps on December 17, 1941, in San Diego; there, four years and two weeks later, it officially ended. In between came the adventures and misadventures that are the subject of his book.

In boot camp, Willis survived his first Marine haircut, an exercise during which a young Marine threw a grenade the wrong way, and an attempt by Navy doctors to improve his health by removing his tonsils in an operation that nearly killed him. His observations, as a member of the 5th Marine Division, of the reaction of Hawaiians before and after the Iwo Jima campaign to the arrival of U.S. Marines in Hilo, Hawaii, raise questions concerning the depth of their loyalty to the United States. The Battle for Iwo Jima, however, is the heart and soul of this book. A volcanic island (the name means Sulfur Island), Iwo Jima is five miles long by two-and-a-half wide. Situated halfway between Tokyo and the U.S. air base on the Pacific island of Saipan, it was crucial to the effort to launch more frequent and deadlier air raids against Japan. Iwo Jima, however, was heavily fortified and defended by 20,000 Japanese troops. The ensuing battle, which lasted from February to March 1944, was one of the bloodiest in the Pacific theater, costing the United States over 6,800 dead Marines and more than 17,000 wounded.

Willis was there from beginning to end. He writes of being in the fourth wave of the invasion force and watching as most of the first three waves—men and machines—were blown to smithereens. American military intelligence had misjudged the location and size of the Japanese guns, as well as the effectiveness of Army Air Force bombing and Navy shelling in weakening the enemy.

The sea and beach quickly ran red with blood. Hulks of destroyed landing craft and bodies of dead Marines clogged the waters and choked the beach. The wounded had to endure their pain until the second day, since wreckage and debris prevented evacuation. That first night, the surviving Marines remained pinned down on the beach, shivering in the rain. Only the shooting by the Navy of illuminating starburst shells prevented the Japanese troops from launching a banzai charge to exterminate the vulnerable Marines. Willis vividly describes the scene the second day as demolition crews worked feverishly to blast openings through the wreckage to enable bulldozer tanks to come ashore and clear the beach so the wounded could be removed and reinforcements landed.

He was there on February 23, 1944, when Marines raised the American flag on Mount Suribachi, although more than two weeks of heavy fighting lay ahead of them. Willis recounts his experiences during that month of hell and how he was nearly killed more than once. The Japanese used dum-dum (known today as "black talon") bullets against the Marines to rip out as much flesh as possible with each shot. He was present when U.S. military leaders decided to declare victory in March, ordering ammo collected, rifles unloaded, and him to take several squads back to a troop ship lying off the coast of the island. This "victory" turned out to be a fatal illusion for those Marines left unarmed on Iwo Jima: Many were butchered in their sleep by several hundred Japanese troops who had been hiding out in caves. When victory truly was achieved, Willis's battalion had been reduced to the size of a company.

After Iwo Jima, the battalion was shipped back to Hawaii. But it soon boarded another troop ship, sailing east again and stopping at Midway, Guam, Kwajalein, and Saipan, where it was

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joined by more troop ships and several destroyer escorts. This armada had been assembled for "Operation Olympia"—the invasion of Japan.

Willis powerfully conveys the relief that he and his fellow Marines felt when the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki—not the planned amphibious invasion—ended the Pacific war. Had the bomb not been dropped, the invasion of Japan would have required at least 36 U.S. combat divisions plus support forces—a total of four-and-a-half million men or 40 percent of all servicemen in uniform in 1945. By conservative estimates, the invasion would have resulted in over one quarter of a million Americans dead and another million casualties. These estimates were based on the assumption that, in August 1945, the Japanese had no more than 2,500 aircraft (of which only 300 were believed to be operational) to repel an invasion. It was later discovered that Japan had 12,725 planes available and was prepared to launch continuous kamikaze attacks on U.S. troop ships for ten days. The Japanese also possessed rocket-propelled bombs similar to Germany's V-1; 40 conventional submarines; over 200 two-man suicide subs and more than 100 five-man suicide subs; 4,000 military motorboats wired with explosives; 120 special torpedoes more than 60 feet long and capable of sinking the largest U.S. warships; 23 destroyers; and two cruisers. Had the invasion occurred, the carnage would have been unimaginable.

Willis's account of his time in Sasebo, Japan, as part of the U.S. occupation force—his adventures ranged from confronting rats nearly the size of cats to guarding millions of cases of Coca-Cola that arrived in lieu of winter clothing—is hilarious. His return to San Diego aboard the U.S.S. *Mobile*, his subsequent discharge, and his experience as a civilian still in Marine green are alternately funny, heartwarming, and insightful.

"In a time of universal deceit," George Orwell wrote, "telling the truth is a revolutionary act." *My Life as a Jarhead: USMC 1941-45* is one of those revolutionary acts, and Ralph Walker Willis is, in that sense, a "revolutionary." Today, as our republic is being replaced by an empire and history is in danger of becoming "a lie agreed upon," America desperately needs more "revolutionaries" like Ralph Walker Willis, U.S.M.C.

Joseph Fallon writes from Rye, New York.

Two Between the Ribs

by Clyde Wilson

Hooking Up
by Tom Wolfe
New York: Farrar Straus Giroux; 293 pp., $25.00

The Lecturer's Tale
by James Hynes
New York: Picador USA; 388 pp., $25.00

◆

How does he get away with it? Ever since *Bonfire of the Vanities*, I have wondered at Tom Wolfe's success. The success itself is well deserved: Wolfe is a dazzling writer, without peer as an observer of contemporary American life. But can't the brilliant social and literary critics of New York figure out what he is up to? Have they ever actually *read* his books? (A suspicion I have long held about some professors is that they discourse pompously upon classic works that they know only by the labels pasted on them by others.) In *Bonfire*, Wolfe exposed the warts beneath the expert makeup on the shining countenances of every institution and nearly every major ethnic group in New York City, revealing the self-appointed, supreme American beauty for what she is—a decayed, pox-ridden harlot. The novel is a rollicking good story that one does not have to be a *New York Review of Books* reader to enjoy. But as George Garrett has pointed out, coming from a Southerner like Wolfe, such an attack is a breach of manners equivalent to a dagger between the ribs.

When the movie version of *Bonfire* (a deserved flop) came out, my puzzlement was not satisfied. Every major character in the book—every telling point in the book—was transformed. In the novel, the Southern belle who catalyzes the plot is unscrupulous, but intelligent and forceful; in the movie, she is a simpering idiot. The unsympathetic Jewish judge is changed to a sympathetic black one. Had Hollywood caught on and deliberately blunted the dagger? Or was it simply another case of the usual vulgarization of text?

Then came *A Man in Full*. Surely they could see it now? They could, of course, pass the novel off as an exposé of the always despicable South (the repulsive world of New South businessmen, racism, college athletics, and phony commercial religion) if they hadn't read the book. But the most telling mask-snatchings in *A Man in Full* reveal the proletarianization of the white working class in California, the social wreckage left behind by the flower children, and a less-than-complimentary view of upwardly mobile blacks and immigrants. One is ordinarily allowed to write about none of these—except in the style of Pollyanna.

Maybe some of them are catching on? In "My Three Stooges," Wolfe hilariously recounts the efforts of Mailer, Irving, and Updike to damn *A Man in Full*, up to and including spluttering obscene harangues on television that were intended to convince the world that Wolfe is not, like them, a real writer and that his works really don't rank as American literature, at least among "us" (the New York intelligentsia who really count).

The essays (if that is the right term) and one fiction story in *Hooking Up* are, without exception, gems of observation, understanding, and style. They bring Wolfe's laser beam further into forbidden territory, revealing still more unfashionable facets of American life: The catastrophic collapse of culture and morals is the overriding motif. Wolfe, in his reportage, traces significant phenomena, the kind that "intellectuals" always miss: the engineers and entrepreneurs who created Silicon Valley and the revolution it symbolizes; the thinkers (including Edward O. Wilson) who have brought the attention of the world, for better or worse, back from nurture to the centrality of nature; the deplorable state of American art, architecture, education, and the novel.

Beneath the motif of decadence lies another, softer one: that of a society living on the remnants of Christianity—the Midwestern Protestant background of the pioneer computer geniuses is a case in point. And in the story "Ambush at Fort Bragg," Wolfe exposes—beyond mercy—the dishonesty, ignorance, and egotism behind the production of television "news." If they don't get the message now, they never will; and I expect the television celebrities are too far gone in self-worship and empire-think ever to see themselves in the stark light of truth.

Anyone concerned about the state of education in America will do well to heed Wolfe's treatment of academia and "intellectuals." Another one, right be-

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tween the ribs! Intellectualism—the cult of ignorant indignation—amounts to the seeking of sainthood by revolting against a society that is, supposedly, ignorant and clueless. For Wolfe, however, the self-appointed saints have missed the real point: How could they not notice and give credit to America's astounding successes—the innovation, the democratic spirit, the freedom, the unimaginable affluence of the common people?

Hilaire Belloc, who hated dons (he lost out on an appointment at Oxford), maintained that they all had something wrong with them—a stutter, a limp, the inability to chat up a mere slip of a girl. That is not entirely true anymore, thanks to the American fetishization of education and to Sputnik, which resulted in the pouring of billions of dollars into "higher" education, drawing to academia an infestation of well-groomed parasites far worse than those fumbling dons—con artists, rakes, bureaucrats, politicians.

James Hynes' *The Lecturer's Tale* plunges delightfully into that world, via the English faculty of the fictional (but representative) Midwestern University of Minnesota. The Lecturer is a naive academic whose career is going down the plumbing system because he really loves and believes in literature and wants to impart his knowledge to the young.

In the course of a plot that includes supernatural elements reminiscent of C.S. Lewis's fiction, Hynes lays bare, with only slightly heightened caricature, all of the successful types in present-day institutions of "higher" education, where reputation bears not the slightest relationship to either scholarship or the well-being of students, much less the transmission of Western civilization. These characters are only slightly heightened by caricature: After all, we live in a country where Stanley Fish is paid more than a quarter-million dollars a year as a professor of literature to teach that literature has no meaning.

Evelyn Waugh once wrote that his novels could not properly be described as satires because satire involves pointing out the gap between standards and behavior, and he was writing about people who had no standards. By Waugh's rule, we can't call *The Lecturer's Tale* a satire. Besides, it's hard to satirize what is already its own parody. Yes, it really *is* that bad. As the Australians say: "Too true."

Clyde Wilson has been proudly scribbling for Chronicles *for two decades now.*

I Am Not Ashamed Either

by J.O. Tate

Death on the Cheap: The Lost B Movies of Film Noir
by Arthur Lyons
Cambridge: Da Capo Press; 212 pp., $17.50

◆

Ever since the *cinéaste* Nino Frank first used the term in France in 1946 (he never said he invented it), there has been considerable controversy about the meaning of "*film noir*" and various attempts to define it, some more or less authoritative. The essential arguments have been usefully collected in Silver and Ursini's *Film Noir Reader* (1996).

Because of the collaborative nature of film, there have been varied emphases: graphic, obviously; sociological and political, having to do with World War II, the return of the GIs, crime and corruption, and even the McCarthy episode; literary definitions, acknowledging such writers as Hemingway, Hammett, Chandler, McCoy, Woolrich, Goodis, and so on; even an immigrationist perspective, having to do with German and other artists who brought certain stylistic preoccupations with them. These arguments are concerned with the period of 1941-58—or 1939-59, as has been argued—and leave open subsequent developments such as "neo-*noir*" in the 70's, 80's, and 90's. Are these last (such as *Chinatown*, *Farewell, My Lovely*, *Reservoir Dogs*, *The Usual Suspects*, and *Twilight*) homages, pastiches, recreations, or what? If *noir* is a cycle confined to an identifiable period, how can there be "neo-*noir*"?

Arthur Lyons, in his interesting and flawed little book *Death on the Cheap: The Lost B Movie of Film Noir*, has provocatively questioned the standing definitions of *film noir*. Lyons has dismissed the usual guff, displaying contempt for the usual language of film criticism, and he can't be faulted for that. Too much of the language of film criticism is opaque or off-putting or pretentious, phony, and wrong. There comes a point when cultic academicism goes too far. Lyons shows that there also comes a point when it doesn't go far enough.

The best part of his book is his dismissal of previous definitions. He apparently thinks that *noirs* are just juiced-up B movies. Lyons emphasizes economics in the definition of *noir* and neo-*noir*, suggesting that such films have more to do with escape, entertainment, and vicarious thrills than with a national mental dysfunction. And he goes further, quoting Gerald Petievich: "Story and story only defines film noir. Director tastes and techniques have nothing to do with the archetype noir tale." Lyons, insisting on thematics—alienation, social corruption, obsession, fatalism, and sexual perversity—sees *film noir* as nothing more than a faddish way of packaging the crime film. "*Film noir*" is for him a back-projection by intellectuals: He suggests that nobody who made *film noirs* in the first cycle knew they were making them, though the very phenomenon suggests that the opposite is true. Quoting clueless actors doesn't prove anything.

But Lyons does not sustain his argument about "story." He invests only 66 pages of exposition in the literary background and the history and economics of the B film before devoting nearly a hundred pages to a "filmography"—an alphabetized list of forgotten flicks that his subtitle implies are essential to *film noir*. This filmography (and its glossy photos) will, no doubt, sell his book; but it is not vitally related to his argument, and it even contradicts it. Having insisted on "story," he refers again and again to style, noted cinematographers, and connections to other *film noirs*, implying an acknowledgment of style. Furthermore, many (if not most) of the films he glosses are negligible, or just plain bad—causing him to veer into vulgarity and fanzine-type irrelevancies, reciting the campy stuff about Sonny Tufts (a favorite sneer-target of Johnny Carson), and telling us who Von Stroheim was shacking up with when he made *The Mask of Diijon* (1946), and how Liz Renay, who played a gangster's moll (*Date with Death*, 1959) really *was* one (Mickey Cohen's), and how Tom Conway died destitute, and how Barbara Payton (*Bad Blonde*, 1953) was arrested for prostitution, drunkenness, and writing bad checks, but was not arrested for writing her autobiography, *I Am Not Ashamed*. None of this stuff matters as far as the viewing experience goes, and even there it is rather deflating to read, as in his discussion of *Key Witness* (1947): "Dumbly overwritten and only marginally acted, this forgettable programmer has appropriately pretty much

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been forgotten." If that is so—and I don't doubt that it is—then life is too short not only for viewing that movie, but also for reading about it.

Nevertheless, *Death on the Cheap* is good to have for its exposition regarding B movies and the citations of some good *noirs* that many people today are in search of. Lyons has succeeded in his way, but the perplexities of *noir* theory and the questions he raises about the quality of the films are hardly resolved.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

The Janus Faces of War

by Paul Gottfried

A Muse of Fire: Literature, Art, and War
by A.D. Harvey
London: The Hambledon Press; 326 pp., $45.00

Captivity, Flight, and Survival in World War II
by Alan J. Levine
Westport, CT: Praeger Press; 258 pp., $67.50

◆

A.D. Harvey's study of art and war, while noting the suffering caused by the European wars of the 19th and 20th centuries, highlights the artistic and spiritual creativity released by these struggles. He regards the Great War, unlike World War II (which produced for the most part "tired accents"), as an exhilarating contest, which poets and artists ran to join. Harvey piles up the names and literary works associated with that war and shows that it spurred not only wartime creativity but a postwar culture shaped by military participation. The memorable literature that distilled the wartime experience did not simply rehash the propaganda of the belligerents; instead, it treated the struggle as a purifying or ennobling event without demonizing the enemy. Harvey makes his point by adducing the work of, among many others, Ernst Jünger, Siegfried Sassoon, and Wilfrid Owen, all of whom experienced the agony of trench warfare on the Western front.

What Harvey, who had family on both sides of World War I, does not fully recognize is that some writers had understood what might happen in 1914 and had desperately argued against the European collision. Among the Cassandras of the time were the Habsburg loyalist and dramatist Hugo von Hoffmansthal and Italian novelist and playwright Luigi Pirandello. Both admired the pre-1914 European civilization, had social and cultural affinities with the Latin and Germanic worlds, and perceived World War I as an internal European struggle that had to be avoided at all costs. Pirandello's novelette, *Berecche e la Guerra*, though published in 1934, describes his horrified reactions to World War I. As an Italian educated in Germany with family members drafted into (and dying in) both the Italian and Austrian armies, Pirandello never recovered from what he saw as "*il salto nella caligine della preistorica*"—Europe's leap backward into the darkness of prehistoric times.

As the newly appointed editor of the *Salisbury Review*, Harvey may now be a certified right-winger. Alan J. Levine remains a self-described FDR and Truman Democrat, albeit one whose loyalties shifted to the Eisenhower-Dulles administration after 1952. Although Levine writes mostly military-diplomatic and military-technological histories, his predilections and dislikes do come through. Acheson, Truman, Churchill, FDR, Eisenhower, and MacArthur fare well in his work, while the America Firsters are treated as insular and silly, though not malevolent. I might describe Levine as a conventional Cold War liberal, except for two distinguishing marks: First, he expresses no strong dislike for World War II isolationists, though he thinks they were wrong in their assessment of the Nazi danger. (Levine wrote a scathing review in *The World and I* of Pat Buchanan's commentary on American interventionism during World War Two, yet his remarks do not suggest any scorn for the author. Rather, he has expressed regret to me that an honorable public figure, who speaks courageously about immigration, would venture into scholarly matters exceeding his competence.) However, he despises those who were soft on the Soviets. As Levine points out, pro-Soviet "appeasers" were not simply misguided patriots who, like Charles Lindbergh, rallied to their country once it was at war. Western apologists for the Soviets, as portrayed by Levine, were predominantly sympathetic to a genocidal, totalitarian enemy. While he has nothing but condescending contempt for Joe McCarthy, Levine treats some anti-anti-McCarthyites, particularly James Burnham, with *enormous* respect.

Second, while Levine approves of some New Deal innovations, he cannot find much good to say about the subsequent changes in American politics and culture. Never in the narrative does Levine show the slightest deference to the *Zeitgeist*. He frequently identifies concentration-camp commandants and torturers as homosexuals and lesbians, and praises non-leftist Christians who helped persecuted Jews. His characterizations, based on the testimony of concentration-camp inmates, are correct. But they do offend against the prevailing establishment ideology, together with its peculiar form of holocaust revisionism.

Levine examines the escapes from inhuman wartime prisons in Europe and Asia; he stresses the difficulty of these feats for those who carried them out. In doing so, he avoids two equally erroneous misrepresentations that have been fashionable at different times: that camp inmates were totally passive in the face of their destroyers; and that they repeatedly engaged in dramatic and heroic revolts. Although Levine shows that breakouts from Treblinka and Sobibor did occur late in 1943, and occasional escapes were made from Auschwitz and Theresianstadt, he emphasizes that these were exceptional occurrences involving, at most, a few hundred inmates, the majority of whom subsequently perished. For Levine, wars are always grim. The virtues he associates with war are persistence in pursuing a reasonable strategy and the steady management of fortune; his warrior heroes—Eisenhower, Nimitz, and Rommel—were careful planners who always provided for contingencies.

Though some of the differences between Harvey's celebration of martial virtue and Levine's restrained admiration of efficiency may lie in the periods themselves, others might reflect the difference between a rooted conservative's love of country and the rootlessnes of a New Deal liberal.

Paul Gottfried is a professor of humanities at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania and the author, most recently, of After Liberalism: Mass Democracy in the Managerial State *(Princeton).*

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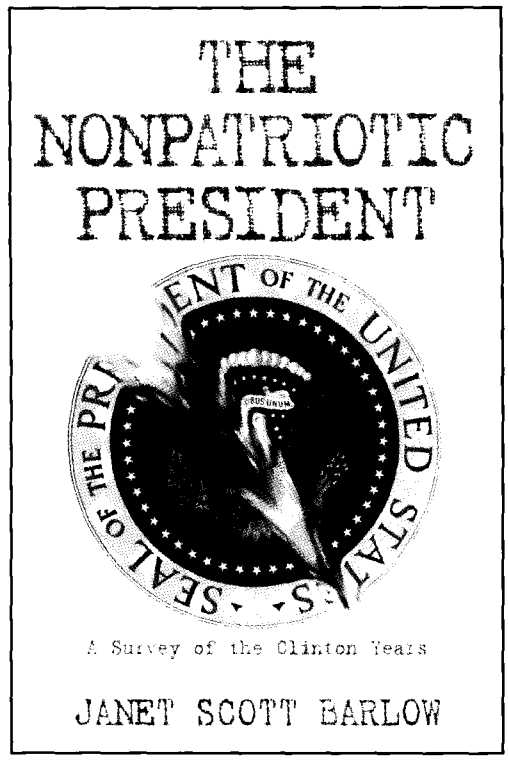

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by Samuel Francis

The Proletarian Weapon

No sooner had George W. Bush entered the White House and its previous occupants padded off to Harlem—with as much public swag as they could pack into the helicopters—than the news media suddenly began to discover "layoffs," "downturns," and a looming economic crisis that threatened to strip the flesh from the eight fat years that the great and wise Clinton administration bestowed upon us. Were the media trying to knife Mr. Bush in the back—even before he had a chance to throw out the beer cans and brassieres that the Clinton clan left behind? There is no question that the economy did suddenly begin to sour, but the new administration really could not be blamed for it, no matter how convenient its arrival on the eve of yet another romp around the business cycle.

If there is any concrete cause of the recent economic wobbles, it probably lies in what everyone now fondly terms "globalization," the process by which nation after nation is stripped of its industrial plants, skills, jobs, and even native population and converted into a vast cow pasture where herds of former citizens and barely assimilated aliens calmly munch whatever fodder and slop is dumped in front of them: the mental diet stuffed down our maws by the organs of the dominant culture. Globalization may temporarily raise the living standards of those who experience it, but eventually—and the significance of the stories about layoffs earlier this year suggests that "eventually" is coming closer and closer—it will reduce the national level of affluence to one more typical of the Third World, enveloping the historic nation and its political and cultural identity in the global fog.

The potential metamorphosis of Americans into First World proletarians was brought to mind by a February 6 *Wall Street Journal* essay by neoconservative sage Charles Murray, coauthor (with the late Richard Herrnstein) of *The Bell Curve* and almost always a source of far more interesting ideas and insights than most of the neocon mediocrities, has-beens, and never-weres with whom he associates. The subject of Mr. Murray's article was the phenomenon of "proletarianization" itself.

Mr. Murray made use of Arnold J. Toynbee's definition of the term "proletariat" rather than the better-known definition of Karl Marx, and he quoted Toynbee as arguing that, in periods of civilizational decline, the "dominant minority" or ruling class of a civilization will begin to emulate the proletariat it rules. The elite itself will abandon the duties of citizenship, "surrender to a sense of promiscuity," and begin to exhibit styles of behavior that "are apt to appear first in the ranks of the proletariat and to spread from there to the ranks of the dominant minority, which succumbs to the sickness of 'proletarianization.'" Mr. Murray noted as current signs of proletarian emulation the use of drugs, the popularity of rap music, the vulgarization of language, and the acceptance of sexual license (including illegitimacy), all of which are notoriously spreading up from the underclass. As the preeminent model for such behavior, he cited the repellent entertainer Eminem and, as the archetypal example of a member of the dominant minority who has adopted such behavior, none other than Bill Clinton himself. "Bill Clinton's presidency," he wrote,

> in both its conduct and in reactions to that conduct, was a paradigmatic example of elites that have been infected by "the sickness of proletarianization." The survival of our culture requires that we somehow contrive to get well.

As usual, Mr. Murray's ideas provoke other ideas. There is no doubt that he is correct, though far from being the first to notice or write about it, that what is ordinarily regarded as moral and behavioral decline has crept up the social ladder and infected parts of American society outside the underclass. But, as I argued in this column last November, what appears as decline to the adherents of one civilization and its moral code is not necessarily reckoned a decline by adherents to what is trying to become a new and different civilization and morality. What pagan Romans regarded as morally normal or neutral (infanticide, homosexuality, gladiatorial games in which the contestants were forced to slaughter each other), early Christians thought abhorrent. One of the central confusions of our age is that we live in a society that is between civilizations—on the one hand, the old bourgeois, Western, and generally Christian civilization that rejects and condemns the "proletarian" behavior Mr. Murray and Toynbee describe, and, on the other, a new managerial, non-Western, and supposedly rationalist, secularist, universalist, and egalitarian civilization that often sees little wrong or "sick" in the new codes of behavior. That does not mean that the new civilization is "relativist" or rejects all morality; it rejects the old morality while trying to formulate a new moral code appropriate to itself. Of course, in the process of civilizational change, some people who are merely vicious may take advantage of the moral confusion for their own gain. That is where characters like Bill Clinton come in; it is precisely because of the moral and civilizational confusion of our times that he could so successfully try to talk his way out of his troubles by telling us that it depends on what you mean by "sex" and what you mean by "is." A clearheaded civilization knows perfectly well the meaning of these and other words, but in times of confusion, enough *don't* know (or disagree about) their meanings that knaves such as Mr. Clinton can get themselves off by exploiting the muddle.

Nevertheless, although the Toynbee-Murray model of proletarianization may apply to Bill Clinton and no small number of his political and business cronies, it is not clear that the concept is applicable to most members of the new managerial ruling class—the dominant minority—of American (and by extension, Western) civilization. Most members of the corporate elite, the political elite, and (with the exception of social deviates in the entertainment elite, like Eminem) the cultural elite (academics, scientists, journalists, authors, etc.) are not particularly notable for emulating the proletariat or underclass. They don't rot their brains with drugs, catch venereal diseases from licentious sex, shoot each other over their basketball shoes, or riot in the streets when

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one of their favorite television stars gets convicted or one of the celebrities they have decided to hate is acquitted. That is exactly how the underclass in American society and, indeed, in most societies behaves; and as corrupt, degenerate, arrogant, and narrow-minded as our ruling class is, most of its members don't behave that way.

The point that Mr. Murray seems to have missed—and, as insightful as he usually is, I would suggest his missing it comes from being a neoconservative who is, therefore, on the side of the ruling elite, whatever its flaws—is that proletarianization is not so much a behavioral pattern of the elite as it is a tactic by which the elite contrives to intensify and extend its domination over the nonelite strata of society. That brings us back to globalization, as well as to the culture of degeneracy Mr. Eminem represents.

The managerial elite typically (though not always) exercises power through manipulation rather than force, reflecting Machiavelli's foxes rather than lions. One of its instruments of manipulation is proletarianization itself, the process by which it destroys alternative centers of power and possible resistance by undermining social institutions and traditional patterns of belief. Economically, proletarianization takes the form of organizing the mass labor force into positions of dependency—as workers in mass factories and offices, members of mass unions, and consumers of mass-produced and mass-distributed goods and services. Once entwined in such dependency, few workers are able to mount much resistance to the policies and directives of the system without being vulnerable to retaliation—and most don't even want to. Globalization is merely a further intensification of economic as well as social proletarianization, reducing the labor force to further dependency on a foreign economic plant over which neither the workers nor any other American has control.

Socially, proletarianization takes the form of undermining and disciplining such social institutions as families, neighborhoods, locally autonomous communities, schools, religious bodies, and similar groups. Typically, the process is carried out by encouraging the growth in scale and size of such groups to the point that they can no longer be disciplined or administered by traditional, personal, local, and informal procedures; they become so large and complicated that they have to be governed by technically skilled experts (managers). The same process takes place on the political level through the organization of politics in mass political parties, local governments that are larger and more powerful than most empires of the past, mass elections that are virtually meaningless, and the invasion of social and private institutions by the centralizing and public organs of the state. Once families, neighborhoods, churches, and schools have been so thoroughly enveloped and intimidated by state power, media scrutiny, and economic dependency that they are unable to mount even any thought of dissent—much less actual resistance—and the population has been converted from a civically active citizenry into a passive proletarian herd, the edifying cultural contributions of Eminem and his colleagues to the heritage of Western civilization are entirely predictable. What Mr. Murray calls the "thug code" becomes the ethic of the mass population that the dominant minority has subdued:

> Take what you want, respond violently to anyone who antagonizes you, gloat when you win, despise courtesy as weakness, treat women as receptacles, take pride in cheating, deceiving, or exploiting successfully.

Obviously, you don't want to meet someone who abides by this code in a dark alley, but you need have no fear of him if you run into him on a battlefield, in a political contest, or in a cultural conflict. Thugs and those who live by their code cannot be rulers or even serious contestants for power because they lack the self-discipline required to get, use, and keep power; they are by nature slaves, and a ruling class able to induce such codes and behavior in its subject populations need worry very little about being overthrown.

Mr. Murray acknowledges that, as yet, only a "tiny minority" actually lives by the thug code, but he is entirely correct in saying that there can be no counterweight from the ruling elite—not because, as he argues, the elite has lost confidence in its own codes, but because the elite wants the thug code and proletarianization to prevail, does all it can to encourage it, and distrusts and hates and tries to destroy anyone who points this out, resists, or tries to uphold alternative traditional codes. The elite, the dominant minority, is the real enemy, and if you want to reverse proletarianization, you must first rid society of its ruling class.

With all due respect to Mr. Murray, this is also something that he perhaps cannot bring himself to recognize. As a neoconservative, he is committed to the defense of American society as it is currently structured, with only minimal reforms on the formal governmental level. For the most part, the neoconservative movement has decidedly rejected, and even expressed abhorrence for, the paleoconservative view that American society is decadent, corrupt, and in decline. Paleoconservative political strategy has generally been willing to consider far more radical measures than those neocons support: the rejection of the New Deal, the dismantlement of the federal megastate, the withdrawal from Cold War international commitments and activism, the repeal of civil-rights legislation, the termination of immigration, etc. Paleoconservatives have espoused either an outright reactionary political strategy by which the current regime is replaced by another modeled on earlier systems, or a revolutionary (or, if you will, counterrevolutionary) strategy, by which a new but radically conservative system is constructed. Neoconservatives have no interest in (and usually considerable fear and dislike of) both paleo alternatives, and Mr. Murray's final sentence in his article—"the survival of our culture requires that we somehow contrive to get well"—is as true as it is unhelpful.

Of course we need to get well; but if the dominant minority that controls the government, the economy, and the culture is at the root of the disease, we cannot get well until we rid ourselves of the dominant minority. Neoconservatives, unwilling and unable to contemplate such radicalism of the right, are left with only a strategy of exhortation: Please, please don't be so proletarian; please don't be racially conscious; please believe in a color-blind society; please act like a good ruling class and not like the gang of tyrants and criminals that you are. Admittedly, paleoconservatives have failed to make much progress toward either reaction or counterrevolution; but at least they see and have constructed a body of social and political analysis that tries to make clear that the incumbent ruling class—and, for the most part, the neoconservatives who make it their business to defend that class and its system of rule—are not the solution, but the problem itself.

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Letter From Rockford

by Scott P. Richert

Not in Your Back Yard

"Why is the traffic stopped?"

"Is that a cop car?"

"Yeah, there must've been an accident."

"No, he's directing traffic. They're all waiting to get in the parking lot! The gym's going to be packed!"

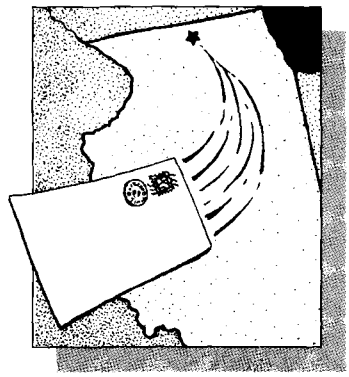
"He's not letting anyone else in," Mary says, deftly turning the minivan around in the freezing rain. She pulls off onto the shoulder, and the three of us—Mary Hitchcock, battle-weary veteran of the Rockford school wars; Mark Dahlgren, convicted tree-hugger, church organist, and unpaid mercenary in the fight for justice; and myself—dart across the road and slog through the puddles, ice, and snow in the parking lot. With each step, our little band grows; by the time we reach the door, we have to wait in line to be admitted to the ultra-modern, Columbine-style lobby of Roscoe Middle School. (A balcony overlooks a large public area with a stage at one end and only two exits; fish in a barrel, I think to myself.)

We tromp down the stairs, through the barrel, and into the hall outside the gym. After another wait to get inside, we're finally through the doors. "How many people do you think are here?" Mark asks.

"I dunno. Ask that cop what the capacity is."

The bleachers seat 900. Almost every spot is full, and schoolkids are setting up folding chairs on the edge of the court. We split up. Mark and Mary want to be close to the floor so they can wave their homemade signs; I join *Chronicles*' art director, Ward Sterett, and assistant editor, Aaron Wolf, down at the other end of the gym. A hush falls over the crowd; we take our seats as the players assemble on the court. "Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to thank you all for coming here tonight to discuss the proposed Perryville Road extension."

Back in my hometown in Michigan, only a basketball game would have made over 900 people turn out on one of the worst nights of one of the worst winters in recent memory. Here in Winnebago County, however, roads are serious business, as Tom and Jan Ditzler can attest



(see "For Keeps! A Christian Defense of Property," *Views*, May).

In the last days of December, just as the dust of the Ditzler land grab had begun to settle, Winnebago County Board Chairman Kristine O'Rourke Cohn announced that the county intended to extend Perryville Road, which currently ends at Illinois 173 just northeast of Rockford, all the way to the Wisconsin state line. The project is estimated to cost $34 million and to take several years to complete; the county's yearly road budget, however, is only about $3.5 million.

This discrepancy was only one of the red flags that had drawn so many people out on such a night. Every one of the five proposed routes would require the taking of at least one home, and three of them would demand the leveling of *ten* homes. (Two of those would also take a church.) Moreover, the Perryville extension would be the *fourth* major north-south road within a mile and a half, including the I-90 tollway and two Illinois highways. And, finally, considerable land along the routes is owned by large donors to local political campaigns, including William Charles Investments (parent company of local public-works contractor Rockford Blacktop) and Sunil Puri, the Bombay-born head of First Rockford Group, a major real-estate development company in Northern Illinois.

Ward, Aaron, and I are sitting behind Jan Weldon. She and her husband, Bill, live on a farm that has been in his family for over 150 years. The Perryville extension would divide it in two; the road would be only a stone's throw away from their old stone farmhouse.

Most of the meeting goes as expected: Citizens ask specific, thoughtful questions about how the construction will be funded, what the environmental impact will be (all of the routes pass over creeks or through wetlands), and whether the county will conduct a cost-benefit analysis; county officials (with the notable exceptions of board members Pete MacKay, Polly Berg, and Larry Bauer) do their best to evade, mislead, and redirect. As Chairman Cohn explains it, the question is not *whether* Perryville will connect Rockford to Wisconsin, but *which route* it will take. She assures us that she desperately desires our input, but we have to accept the fact that the Perryville extension has been on the county's books for 40 years, and *no one* is going to stop it.

But then somebody does. As the meeting draws to a close, Tom Hawes, the supervisor of Roscoe Township (which would be divided down the middle by the Perryville extension), takes the microphone. "I've been authorized by the Township Board of Trustees to announce that Roscoe Township will not allow the Perryville extension to cross the Stone Bridge Trail." There is a scattering of applause; everyone recognizes that the township board is taking a courageous stance, though most of us assume it's a futile gesture. We only catch on as we start to leave the gym.

"Look at this map!"

"What am I supposed to see?"

"Don't you get it? *All* five of the routes cross the trail! They've stopped the road!"

We can't believe that it's all over; folks who go up against the Winnebago County government aren't used to winning their battles so easily. But out in the hall, I meet David Kurlinkus, the lawyer for Roscoe Township. He explains that the Stone Bridge Trail is protected by multiple layers of government: It was built on top of an abandoned railroad bed, so the federal government controls the railroad right-of-way; the Natural Land Institute, a Rockford-based conservation organization, owns an easement along the trail, and even if they were willing to give it up (which they aren't), they would need the permission of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the governor; and Roscoe Township owns the actual trail, and not a single trustee is willing to sell the land to the county. Most importantly, the county can only use eminent domain against private citizens, not against

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mother municipality.

While it has been gratifying to see 900 people standing in opposition to a big-government boondoggle, the crowd is not the reason we won tonight. The Perryville extension is dead because Tom Hawes and the Roscoe Township Board of Trustees saw it coming seven years ago, and they calmly, quietly, and deliberately laid the groundwork (quite literally) to stop it. Think about that the next time you decide not to vote because "it's only a local election."

In each of the cases I mentioned in my *View* last month—the Ditzler and Hamberlin properties, the Torres Market—the people involved never had a chance to keep their property, because there was no governmental body that could intervene on their behalf. You can have right on your side; you can have broad popular support; but unless you can translate that into political power, you're going to lose. Even the courts offer little protection: In eminent-domain cases today, government is usually treated as the *de facto* owner of your land. In order to win, you have to prove to a government-funded judge that you need it more than the government does.

The token Republican columnist at the local Gannet paper has been crusading for years to abolish township government in Illinois in the name of "efficiency." He's right: Removing that layer of government—the layer that is the least expensive, least intrusive, and closest to the people, even though the people are often unaware of it—*would* make other layers of government more efficient. Without township government, Chairman Cohn would probably be perched on top of a bulldozer tomorrow, rather than sitting in her office, trying to figure out how her well-laid plans went so far astray.

Out in the hall, the victorious organizers are bracing for the coming round of name-calling: "They're going to say this is just another case of NIMBY." Of course it is, but what's wrong with that? What kind of society would we live in if no one ever said, "Not in my back yard"? You want to run a road through my ancestral land? Sure, go right ahead. Have my house while you're at it. Don't bother even offering me fair-market value; just take my property now, and we'll settle up later.

The only problem with NIMBY is that it never seems to extend beyond our respective back yards. You say you want to put a prison in southeastern Winnebago County? Sounds good; I live in downtown Rockford, so it won't affect me. You want to demolish Henry Hamberlin's home to put up a school on the west side of Rockford? That's fine; I live on the east side, and my kids aren't in public school anyway. Why should I care that Chairman Cohn wants to run a road through Tom Ditzler's farm? He lives down in the southwest part of the county; I live up in Roscoe Township.

Last year, longtime county board member (and *Chronicles* subscriber) Pete MacKay challenged Chairman Cohn in the Republican primary. One of his chief campaign promises was to stop the extension of Perryville Road (which, at that time, had not yet reached Illinois 173). He knew he would have a tough time beating Cohn in the city of Rockford; he was confident, however, that he could make up for that with a fairly wide margin of victory in the northern part of the county. But on election night, he polled *worse* in the northern part of the county than anywhere else, and the deciding factor seems to have been his opposition to the Perryville extension. Many Roscoe Township residents—including some of the people who are here tonight—wanted Perryville to run up to Illinois 173 so that they could have more convenient access to the strip malls and chain restaurants on Rockford's far east side. They don't mind driving through what used to be other people's back yards; they just don't want other people driving through *theirs*. In the long run, however, we're only going to rein in government if we couple NIMBY with the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

"Where were all these people when we were fighting our battles down in Rockford?"

"I don't know. Perhaps now they'll begin to understand that we may be fighting on a different front, but it's all the same war."

On the way out, we stop to talk to Tom and Jan Ditzler, who have come to the opposite end of the county to stand up for hundreds of people who didn't stand up for them. It's a bittersweet reunion for the Ditzlers and Mark Dahlgren; the last time they saw him, he was being hauled off to the county jail for trying to prevent county workers from cutting down a tree on the land they had seized from the Ditzlers.

"Have you had your court date?" Jan asks.

"Oh, yes."

"When are you going to stop out and see us? We've missed you."

"Well, the trouble is, they gave me a year's probation, and there are two terms. I can't come within 300 yards of my arresting officer, and I can't set foot on your property."

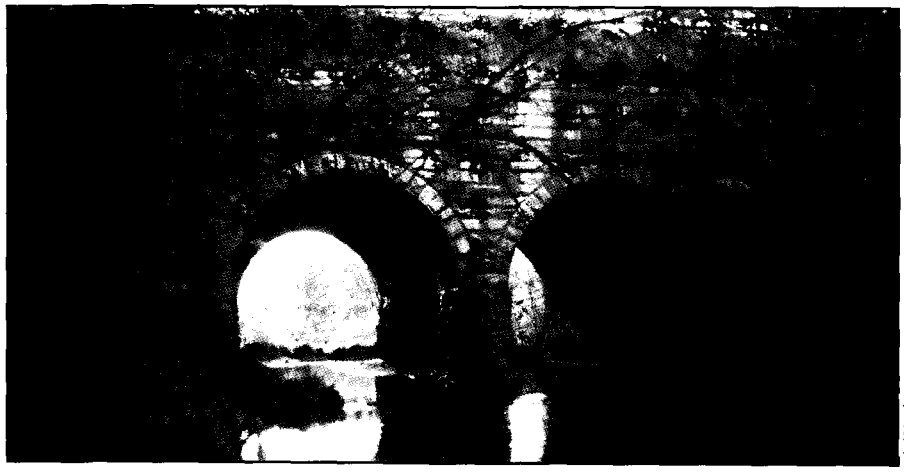
"You mean you can't go on the property that the county *took*."

"No, ma'am, I can't go on *your* property. The document they made me sign listed your address; it didn't mention the property where they're putting in the road."

"WHAT? First, they take over half of our property without even paying us for it, and now they're telling us who we can and can't invite on the land they let us keep? They can't do that."

"Well, they did, ma'am. They most certainly did. That's what they call 'justice' here in Winnebago County."

We say our goodbyes and head back out into the cold winter's night. *This* battle may be over, but there are many more to come before a new spring arrives here in Rockford. c



H. Ward Sterett

The stone bridge that stopped the Perryville extension.

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Letter From Parma

by Andrei Navrozov

Leningrading Verdi

◆

Foreigners often think of life in Italy as operatic, which shows that reinvestment in the obvious is not always a losing proposition. If only more foreigners had followed Nietzsche in asking "If it is true that evil men have no songs, how is it that the Russians have songs?" then perhaps the world would not have become the plaything of wickedness that it is today. And there you have it. All the themes I intend to touch upon in describing my visit to the Teatro Regio in Parma are audible in my opening paragraph.

At the Regio, as part of the Verdi Festival's *Celbrazioni Nazionali* commemorating the centenary of the composer's death, Valery Gergiev led the *Orchestra Kirov del Teatro Mariinskij di San Pietroburgo* in a performance of *Un Ballo in Maschera*, with Ivan Momirov as Riccardo, Sergei Murzaev as Renato, and Olga Sergeeva as Amelia. *Regia: Andrej Konchalovskij.* The name of the person identified in the program as *responsabile dei progetti speciali*, I was amused to note in the interval, was Kalashnikov.

The Kirov is generally in a bit of trouble these days. They cannot really go on calling themselves the Kirov, because names like the Goebbels Playhouse or the Pol Pot Skating Rink or the Amin Luncheonette are no longer in fashion. The fact that, as our parents used to sing, "We's so upset and so worried oh / 'Cos Stalin bumped 'im off in a corridor," does little to restore to the Kirov name some of its original Bolshevik dignity. Equally, they cannot change it back to the Imperial Mariinsky because, in the West, nobody will come—especially those vital ballet audiences of provincial mothers who have been brought up on matinee idols like The Kirov's Own!! Rudolf Nureyev!!! In Moscow, the Bolshoi was luckier for the Bolsheviks. It looked as though they had shrewdly named themselves after the theater.

Without dispute, Gergiev is one of the leading conductors of our day. The real trouble he has to deal with is that, during 70 years of Soviet rule, Russia did not produce even *one* singer worth hearing. Naturally, you may not say "Smirnov" or "Chaliapine" or "Wesselovski" because that would be lying: They had been world famous by 1917, and mentioning them is like giving credit to the *New York Times Book Review* for having fostered Emily Dickinson. And please, I beg you, don't say "Obraztsova" or "Vishnevskaya," or I'll turn around and walk away; we're talking *Italy* here, we're talking the Verdi season, we're talking the Teatro Regio di Parma. Here, in 1837, they actually *rejected* young Verdi. Here, in 1916, Amelita Galli-Curci sang Gilda.

I have the record, and I can only explain the cultural difference between a Galli-Curci and a Vishnevskaya as the distance between a painting by Ingres and a work of socialist realism, though of course one mustn't assume that this explanation will satisfy everybody. As it happened, on the way to Parma I stopped off in Bologna to see an exhibition of Soviet art at the Palazzo Re Enzo. "Could it be," the authors of the catalogue rhetoricized (incredulously and indignantly) "that Stalin's regulations had swept away the artists' expressive capacities, and so filled their consciences as to transform them into mere illustrators of state propaganda?" I don't want to insult anyone, but a hall in the vaulted walkway beneath the Palazzo Re Enzo has a famous acoustic peculiarity, which a friend demonstrated to me after we had seen the exhibition. You talk to the wall, and it talks back. Very Bologna.

Later that night in Parma, we went out to dinner with the only Italian singer in the production, the almost indecently beautiful and almost indescribably gifted Laura Giordano, who sang Oscar. The extravagant compliment I paid her was almost entirely true, namely, that just because we Russians can write books better than the Americans and build tanks better than the Germans does not mean that we should carry *pelmeni* (ravioli, actually) to Parma—that is to say, to sing Verdi at the Teatro Regio. In fact, the tenor Ivan Momirov is Bulgarian, but since he had been audibly booed, I generously included him, too.

In the interests of fairness, I must add that Konchalovsky's staging made for a most beautiful production—in the last scene, the curtain parted with a fireworks of glittering baubles that seemed to have been disgorged by the magnificent ballroom itself, like some Fabergé ornament being given birth by Versace in a painting by Galanin—but then again I never did say that our boys couldn't do theater, or play a musical instrument, or even paint as well as the next KGB man. And yet, mysteriously, they have never been able to sing grand opera, and so after our dinner with *la Laura*, I decided to proceed to another restaurant, where the Russians were celebrating, to learn where Gergiev had found the chutzpah (*palle*, actually) to carry coals to Donbass. I had met the conductor once before, in London, at a dinner given by Donatella Flick at her house in Hyde Park Gate, and thought him perfectly charming, as the mothers who did not want me to date their daughters used to say about me, their lips tightening with menace. "Yes, he is charming. Charming."

But now I must cast off the harmless misdeeds of my remotest past for the sake of one crucial observation: Opera is important to Italy because only in opera does the Italian language become *national* in any meaningful cultural sense; and, as if that were not important enough, only in opera does that language become *international*, in the sense that French may be acknowledged as the language of politics or English the language of science. Singing Italian opera is every note a linguistic exercise, and listening to a fellow who knows no Italian singing Verdi is like seeing a professor of Russian literature at the University of California barging into a Chekhov play in a nylon tracksuit.

It is as though the architectonic structure of musical sound translates itself into the living and breathing chimera of native Italian speech the way a competent architect can render a building by means of a technical drawing, whereas a foreigner's accent imperceptibly erodes and eventually undermines the entire musical structure. The travesty is all the more dastardly for being virtually undetectable, rather the way a man out of his head on cocaine may appear perfectly normal to his own children. Russian grammatical forms, in particular, often mimic the

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talian (*andate* is *idite*), while shared etymologies ensure that *occhi* (eyes) does not look all that different from *ochi* in a libretto. Thus I challenge any Henry Higginses out there to guess that a Russian singer stinks to high heaven on the basis of his elocution alone. Because, as here at midnight, when Amelia goes to gather her magic herbs in the graveyard, elocution *is* the music:

Mezzanotte! . . . ah! che veggio?
Una testa
Di sotterra si leva . . . e sospira!
Ha negli occhi il baleno dell'ira
E m'ffisa e terribile sta!

Once I had arrived at the restaurant where the Mariinsky braves were carousing, however, all was revealed. Amid the discordant cries of "*come si chiama, rebyata, questa cosa*?" and "*per favore, devushka, per favore*!" some 30 of my compatriots were busy commingling vodka with grappa, and I stayed with them until six in the morning. No, none of them had any knowledge of the language beyond that of a prisoner in an internment camp, and when I finally managed to ask the lead baritone's wife, herself a respected soloist with the Bolshoi, how on earth they managed to sing in Italian, the sweet woman replied that, since time immemorial, Russian singers learned the words of the libretti by rote, often after first writing them out in Cyrillic characters.

By time immemorial, she meant the year 1917.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

Letter From Denmark

by Alberto Carosa

Raining on the E.U. Parade

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The Danish vote against the euro last fall was a serious setback for the plans of Brussels eurocrats. The Danish "no" reveals the growing rift between the eurofanaticism of the globalist establishment and the reality of public opinion.

On September 28, 2000, 53.5 percent of Denmark's electorate rejected the euro. The result is even more significant since all major government and opposition parties, the media, businesses, and unions were urging a "yes" vote. The general reaction in the Danish press was that the voters had shot themselves in the foot, losing their right to any say in E.U. affairs.

Unlike the outcome of the 1992 referendum on ratification of the Maastricht Treaty, the rejection of the euro was widely expected, which was why top E.U. officials had minimized the importance of the vote before it was even tallied. Such eurofanatics as French socialist Laurent Fabius, E.U. finance minister and current chairman of the eurogroup, simply told the *Financial Times* that "the euro is doing well and will continue to do so." The fact that the currency has lost 25 percent of its value since its inception is apparently immaterial to him.

Despite protestations to the contrary from Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair and his Swedish colleague Göran Persson, the Danish vote will likely affect the results of similar referenda in those two "euroskeptic" countries. In the aftermath of the Danish referendum, the *Financial Times* (October 3, 2000) reported that many Swedes oppose the euro for the same reasons that the Danes do, namely, a belief that their economy is doing perfectly well without the common currency, suspicions about further political integration, and anxiety about the impact of the euro on generous welfare programs.

Even more significant are the potential consequences for political integration and eastward expansion of the European Union. The real winner that emerged from the referendum was the populist Danish People's Party, led by Pia Kjaersgaard. Often described as a "Danish Haider in woman's clothes," Kjaersgaard has made it clear that her goal is to impede the political unification of Europe.

The People's Party was established five years ago in the midst of increasing anti-E.U. sentiment; according to the *International Herald Tribune* (September 28, 2000), it has gained votes by arguing that integration into the European Union will lead to more immigration. Since almost half of the crimes in Denmark are committed by immigrants, it is not surprising that recent opinion polls show the People's Party at 15 percent, making it a serious contender for power in the next election. But Pia Kjaersgaard refuses to exploit the result of the referendum, claiming that the defeat of the euro was a victory not only for her party but for "the whole of Denmark."

In fact, the "no" vote represented the triumph of grassroots democracy over both local politicians and the unelected and unaccountable political machine in Brussels and Strasbourg. The Danes realized that the referendum concerned not only monetary issues but the question of Danish national identity. The deep-rooted feelings of the average Dane were epitomized in such statements as "Economic issues are not all in life. There are other values. I will vote no because I do not want to lose my identity. I am and want to remain a Dane" (*Il Giornale*, September 28, 2000) and "We have a great problem with Moslems. They are not coming here to become Danish Christians, but to Islamic[ize] Denmark" (*La Repubblica*, September 30, 2000). This opinion is shared by Peter Skaarup, the ideologue of the Danish People's Party. Muslims in Denmark, he argues, are attempting to impose their way of life: "For example, they regard women as inferior, expect Moslem girls to wear the chador and harass our girls up to the point of raping them" (*Il Giornale*, September 30, 2000).

Another factor that affected the outcome of the referendum was the way the European Union has treated Austria with respect to Jörg Haider, which has strengthened Danish fears that minor nations such as Austria and Denmark would be overpowered by E.U. heavyweights. Indeed, Italian Foreign Minister Lamberto Dini has argued that, in E.U. decisionmaking, majority rule "must be used in general, while the need for unanimity must be the exception." It "has been accepted by all," he declared, that the votes of larger states will carry more weight. But who, exactly, is "all"? Certainly not the Danes and probably not other small E.U. nations.

The truth of the matter is that "the whole drive toward European union lacks democratic legitimacy." This is not the opinion of a fanatical europhobe, but of the *International Herald Tribune* (October 4, 2000), whose political correctness is beyond dispute. Although the Danish population has had regular opportunities to express its opinion on the European Union (the September vote was the sixth poll), most European voters have never been consulted by their governments (Italy, for example, has never held a vote).

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If the value of a currency depends on the confidence of its users, then the depressing plight of the euro shows that most Europeans have no confidence in it. The woes of the euro bear witness to the failure of the "Monnet method" of European unification. Against the federalist vision of Altiero Spinelli (1907-1986), based on a constitutional assembly charged with creating a "United States of Europe," Jean Monnet (1888-1979) opposed his "functionalist" strategy of political unification through the gradual integration of economic structures.

The drafting of a charter of fundamental rights for the European Union is presently under way; the intent is to replace Monnet's monetary Europe with a Europe of rights and values. But what kind of rights and values? The current draft does not provide for the rights to life and religious freedom, and a reference to the "religious, humanistic and cultural legacy" of Europe, proposed by the Bavarian Christian Democrats, was rejected by French Socialist Premier Lionel Jospin, who said he could never accept a European identity based on a "religious legacy."

Alberto Carosa is the editor of Famiglia Domani Flash, *a pro-family newsletter published in Rome.*

Letter From Australia

by R.J. Stove

Charlie Is Their Darling

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On October 25, 2000, central Sydney's traffic stood still for hours, for the first time since the Olympiad. Inside the late-Victorian Town Hall, approximately 2,000 pilgrims witnessed the Aboriginal faith's latest canonization: the state funeral of Charles Perkins, who had died on October 18 after 29 years of daily medical dependence on the "whitefella" culture he so despised—which, in his case, took the form of a kidney transplant.

Huge banners bearing Perkins' portrait were scattered among the mourners, who included gold medallist Cathy Freeman. Those familiar with North Korean crowd scenes at the height of Kim Il-Sung's reign experienced a profound shock of recognition, lessened only by the indigenous smoke-dancing.

With one voice, local headline writers called Perkins "Australia's Martin Luther King." (In an even crazier appeal to political correctness, TV networks warned Aboriginal viewers to cease watching if they might be offended, "for cultural reasons," by the idea of Perkins' name and photo being broadcast!) To New South Wales' Premier Bob Carr, Perkins warranted plaudits for his courage in the "relatively lonely cause" of Aboriginal rights. "Australia," New South Wales Supreme Court Chief Justice Jim Spigelman said, "is a better and fairer place because of him." Geoff Clark of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (recently questioned by police in connection with four counts of rape) exhibited more originality. Of Perkins' decades-old and taxpayer-funded appetite for acquiring some of Sydney's most expensive real estate—notably a $1.25-million mansion in the modish suburb of Newtown—Clark declared, "I think Charlie was a great businessman."

Every newspaper in Australia's capital cities reprinted—and, when rebuked by readers, failed to correct—the lie that Perkins was Australia's first Aborigine to graduate from an Australian campus. (The first acknowledged full-blood Aboriginal was actually Margaret Valadian in 1966. Yet part-blood Aborigines had been graduating for decades; Australia had so little legal sanction against Aboriginal achievement that it produced internationally touring Aboriginal cricket teams as far back as the 1860's.)

Largely forgotten amid all the hoopla were Perkins' April 3, 2000, BBC interview urging indigenous peoples to disrupt the Olympics, and Perkins' general inability to work with others. His entire adult life was full of clashes with fellow bureaucrats. Perkins' passing, whatever else it does, should make us ponder Voltaire's dictum: "To the living we owe charity; to the dead we owe truth." We do Perkins's memory no service by coating it in sanctimonious treacle that only nourishes the gag reflex.

Tabloid disinformation notwithstanding, Perkins' closest American counterpart was not, in fact, Martin Luther King, Jr. (however similar the two men's approaches to academic "scholarship" might have been), but Adam Clayton Powell, whom he resembled in both his virtues and his vices. Like Powell, Perkins could, on occasion, smile and joke, if only to disarm newsmen. ("I like whites, married one," he said, assuring *Sydney Morning Herald* columnist Mike Carlton of his freedom from vulgar racial prejudice.) That he could call his memoirs A *Bastard Like Me* indicates a certain impatience with humbug—an impatience markedly absent from the attitude of younger Aboriginal apparatchiks, whose inability to communicate in anything resembling decent English is, perhaps, our sole protection against their power. At a deeper level, nonetheless, the gulf separating Perkins and his successors is a distinction without a difference. On the slogans that matter—equating white Australia with Nazi Germany; incessantly demanding that John Howard, prime minister since 1996, publicly apologize for his predecessors' alleged sins in Aboriginal children's schooling; decrying the obscene evil of anyone even attempting to reduce the welfare dependence of Aboriginal communities—Perkins had no quarrel with today's indigenous *nomenklatura*.

A native of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory, Perkins was born in 1936 to unwed parents of different Aboriginal tribes—and, therefore, was doomed to banishment (if not worse), had he remained in his original surroundings. (In its sheer obsession with purity of bloodlines, traditional Aboriginal society could learn little from the Third Reich.) An Anglican hostel oversaw his upbringing; in retrospect, he saw this act of charity as part of a "genocidal" conspiracy—which nonetheless equipped Perkins with the skills to play soccer at a first-grade level.

In an era when visiting Britain was completely beyond the means of all but a minuscule minority of Australians, Perkins enjoyed the luxury of not only visiting the United Kingdom but being paid to live there before he had turned 21. (He played for the British soccer team Everton; after returning to Australia, he played for Adelaide's Croatia Club.) When he finally received his arts degree from Sydney University—at the age of 30—he became the front-page hero of every newspaper in the land.

By then, he had begun devoting his main energies to activism. In 1965, he kidnapped a Fijian girl to keep her from being deported. He ostentatiously described his bus trips to the Outback as "Freedom Rides," though they had no loftier purpose than the exercise of his freedom to get drunk at white-dominated

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otels. (Medgar Evers might have considered Perkins' notions of "redneck bigotry" somewhat dilettantish.) Finally, he obtained a researcher's post at the Federal Office of Aboriginal Affairs, his main power base for the rest of his career. In this role, he publicly castigated members of the Gough Whitlam Cabinet—most notably, his own department's minister at the time, Sen. James Cavanagh. When Perkins' superiors lost patience with his penchant for disappearing from his desk to join anti-white protests on the front lawn of Canberra's Parliament House, they inflicted on him the most severe possible reproof: a year's leave with full pay. Despite his 1974 description of Australia's anti-Labor parties (then in opposition) as pernicious racists, he happily accepted promotion at their hands when they regained government in 1975. His sole punishment for having attributed white-supremacist views to his bosses was to be named assistant secretary of the Aboriginal Affairs Department in 1978. The department's top job came his way five years later, once Labor had returned to power under Prime Minister Bob Hawke.

Perkins' contribution to the national bicentenary celebrations in 1988 consisted of hymns of hatred toward Indo-Chinese refugees from Marxist terror. "We've brought enough of these people from South-East Asia," Perkins proclaimed, to the alarm of Hawke's immigration minister, Gerry Hand, who knew the impossibility of any non-Aboriginal politician's career surviving a similar outburst. Having compounded his Adam Clayton Powell imitation with investment shell games, Perkins found himself compelled to resign—with his entire pension fund intact. Thereafter, he increasingly resembled yesterday's man, insofar as anyone can combine that role with receiving 1993's Aboriginal of the Year award and an honorary doctorate from his *alma mater*. John Howard, whom Perkins called "the worst Prime Minister this country has ever had," declared him a "Living National Treasure."

Perkins' death leaves Aboriginal affairs precisely where he found them—and the statistics are grim. The average life expectancy of full-blooded Aboriginal males remains almost two decades shorter than that of white males (54 years as opposed to 73). The infant-mortality rate is almost three times the corresponding Caucasian figure. Of course, Perkins founded his whole policy on the avoidance of serious issues of Aboriginal health—especially Aboriginal alcoholic poisoning—in favor of advocating what he learned to call "empowerment." To be fair to Perkins, he could not have done otherwise: Although the Warsaw Pact countries discarded socialism's accoutrements 12 years back, no such purgation ever occurred in Australia. The idea that bureaucratic tyrants have a monopoly not just on virtue, but on competence, could no more be challenged by Charles Perkins (or by those who subsidized him) than polluted water can be questioned by a fish. In allowing the likes of Perkins to dwell in their driveling bliss of nanny-statism ("where," as Kipling once observed, "all men are paid for existing and no man must pay for his sins") white Australia is indeed as morally culpable as Perkins said it was.

R.J. Stove writes from Sydney.

Letter From Canada

by Neil Cameron

Utopia and Dystopia on the Saint Lawrence

◆

A quarter of Canada's 30 million people live in the province of Quebec. About five million are French Canadians, largely descended from hardy Norman peasants who came here 300 years ago. A quarter of the five million want to secede from Canada. A larger (but indeterminate) proportion favor as much autonomy as possible without risking a total break. One of the two main provincial parties, the Parti Québécois (PQ), at least rhetorically favors ultimate "sovereignty" and held unsuccessful referenda to this end in 1980 and 1995. "Sovereignty" is something less than full independence; the latter word evokes much less popular support. Both referenda asked only for a "mandate to negotiate," but they didn't get one. Polls have always indicated a blunter question would fare much worse. Since about 40 percent of the province—including a million English speakers—consistently oppose sovereignty, support is unlikely to rise above 60 percent.

Many opponents of sovereignty have long argued that a real separation would inevitably lead to partitioning of the province, with Canada retaining several portions, including the huge northern territory and at least part of Montreal. The case was first fully presented in a 1980 book, *Partition: The Price of Quebec Independence*, by Lionel Albert and William Shaw. A 1996 poll by *L'Actualité*, the main Quebec newsmagazine, showed that over half the provincial population—including voters on both sides of the referendum question—thought a postsecession partition would be likely.

The Canadian constitution makes no provision for any kind of secession by vote. Three years ago, a Canadian Supreme Court test of Quebec's referendum law garnered an opinion that a clear majority secessionist vote should launch a negotiation on Quebec's departure, but left the questions of borders open. Federal Liberals have been quoting this ever since. The Conservative Alliance, while advocating decentralization, also endorses the Supreme Court position. Thus, there has been a profound change in both elite and majority Canadian opinion since 1995. Sovereignists have also become fatigued. Lucien Bouchard, the charismatic but cautious PQ premier from 1995 to January of this year, declared that there would not be another referendum until he saw "winning conditions." His successor, Bernard Landry, is more abrasive and fond of fights with Ottawa, but shows no more inclination to enter a losing battle.

For most of Quebec's history, French Canadian nationalism was chiefly a conservative, Catholic, anti-urban movement, quite hostile to radical separatism. The most celebrated nationalist historian, Robert Rumilly, immigrated from France in the 1920's, seeking a blessed island of Latin Catholic Christianity. He lived long enough to see atheistic socialism and capitalist individualism descend on the province and died a bitter man, equally loathing Pierre Trudeau's leftish federalism and the leftish PQ. The left presented itself as the wave of the future from 1965 to 1995 but ultimately alarmed the new francophone business and professional classes as much as it did their cautious elders. The disintegration of the old Union Nationale Party left many conservative nationalists unhappily voting for the long-detested Liberal Rouges. As a UN party leader once remarked, the province is an eternal battleground of Dominicans and Jesuits.

"Partitionists" are also divided, uncertain whether separation is a real possibili-

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ty, or, as Albert and Shaw argued, primarily a rhetorical threat serving to maintain a statist elite. The skeptics have a strong case: Two decades of polls, for example, consistently show that over one third of Francophones believe that a "sovereign" Quebec would still be "part of Canada" with almost as many believing it would still send MPs to Ottawa. Sovereignty is not like Irish republicanism, nor is partitionism like the "unionism" of Protestant Ulster. Analogies with the American South of 1860, while also tempting, are equally deceptive.

The border issue is further complicated by the Indians and Eskimos. When the French arrived in the 1600's, they encountered a substantial settled population of Mohawks and other tribes. The Mohawks have been a terrific headache for "organic" nationalists ever since. They speak both French and English, and drift casually between Quebec, Ontario, and New York. Their ancestors adopted Protestantism because they disliked the strip farms that the Sulpicians vainly tried to impose on them. They also like owning guns.

In 1990, the natives blew up over a golf course they claimed interfered with their traditional land rights, blocking two of Montreal's main bridges and carrying out a reserve territory occupation by an armed and masked "warrior society." A raid by the SQ, the notoriously inept provincial police, led to a policeman's death. Quebec asked the federal government to send in the Canadian Army to restore order, an embarrassing comment on sovereignist pretensions.

Unsympathetic natives also inhabit the Quebec North, ruled by the British from 1713 and never part of New France. It did not even become part of the province with the British conquest of 1760 or confederation in 1867. It was ceded by Canada to the province in 1898 and 1912, when no secessionist movement existed. Its rich hydroelectric resources keep thousands of French-Canadian Hydro-Québec employees there temporarily, but the only permanent residents are a few thousand anti-sovereignist Cree and Eskimos.

The south shore of the St. Lawrence River was never part of New France; it was added to the province by the British. West Quebec, between Ottawa and Montreal, includes land first cultivated by English farmers over two centuries ago. Most of the area now has a francophone majority, but they largely vote with the English *against* the sovereignists. Montreal, which has hundreds of thousands of English speakers, might also be divided; a former cabinet minister has proposed that Montreal should separate on its own, becoming a sort of Singapore. County-by-county self-determination—"Swiss cheese" partitionism—has also been proposed.

Whatever the details of a negotiated settlement, there is a more fundamental reason that the rest of Canada could scarcely accept the existing provincial boundaries: Unlike the Norway/Sweden or Slovakia/Czech Republic splits, an intact Quebec departure would split the other successor state in two, cutting off four Atlantic provinces from the rest of the country. The St. Lawrence south shore would be the simplest connecting corridor; any other corridor would divide the new independent Quebec.

Even that might prove unacceptable to the rest of Canada. Former Quebec Premier Jacques Parizeau was willing to risk a potentially explosive "unilateral declaration of independence," but this could result in chaotic consequences, without solving the territorial dispute. A stable agreement would require the new state to sacrifice something of great value to a hostile successor Canada, and territory is just about all it would have to offer. Quebec is now balancing its budget and booming economically but is about $100 billion in debt and would have to shoulder another $140 billion of federal debt as well.

While both partitionists and secessionists draw on the Wilsonian doctrine of plebiscitary self-determination, secessionists mean the self-determination of the province as a whole, with guarantees of minority rights. Non-Canadians have sometimes cheered on both positions. Canada has always irritated many Americans and Europeans—"an impossible country," as one Englishman put it a century ago, "because sentiment is divorced from interest." Peter Brimelow, an Englishman who left a career in Canadian business journalism to emigrate to the United States, made a stir a few years ago with the funniest and most penetrating of these outsider commentaries, in a book called *The Patriot Game*. His reforming impatience recalled Lord Macauley, but Canada continued to be resolutely Tory: unworkable in theory, but successful in practice.

Separatist arguments have always been utopian; partitionist ones are a mirror-image dystopian critique. Their real message is that a seceding Quebec could not possibly be created without huge cost. Partition might produce the same unhappy results as those created elsewhere in the world. But separatists maintain that intact departure would cause almost no pain at all. They also insist that the whole debate be conducted with the utmost "serenity."

Historical amnesia is no worse in Quebec than it has lately been generally, but it led local radicals to underestimate inertia and caution. The great "world-historical" events for Canadians were not the conquest or confederation, but the two World Wars—especially World War I. Canada lost over 60,000 men in World War I; its population was then about one 15th that of the U.S. population. Quebec nationalists opposed conscription in both wars, but 200,000 French Canadians nonetheless volunteered to fight in World War II.

The dominant role of the Roman Catholic Church in French education, which lasted until the 1960's, left an odd double inheritance. Secularization initially turned the state into a new church. Like the old one, it is more a home of bureaucrats than of firebrands. Quebeckers are obsessively devoted to public-opinion polls. While Canadians have participated in many wars, neither the French nor the English have much tradition of insurrection or civil conflict, save a skirmish with British colonial rule in 1837 and an inept venture in Marxist terrorism in Quebec 30 years ago. Even the conquest came out of a battle between armies from overseas. Neither secessionists nor their opponents threaten force of arms.

On the other hand, Canada has a very substantial collective memory of patriotic achievement and sacrifice. Even astute outside observers tend to forget the assumptions they import from their own countries, overemphasizing the central political conflict and underestimating such unifying forces as climate, geography, and shared historical experience. The politics may look Austro-Hungarian, but real life here is Scandinavian. Canada would not want to wage war against a departing Quebec, but it would certainly demand *some* heavy price be paid. Partitionism bells the cat.

Neil Cameron is a director of the Saint Lawrence Institute in Montreal and a columnist for the Montreal Gazette.

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Signs of the Times

"All the News Unfit to Print"

The Rockets' Red Glare

While the Bush administration is still in its early days, commentators of repute abroad and at home—never wavering or unsound in the old Cold War days—are complaining (sometimes bitterly) that the new administration's foreign policy defies reason and experience.

Writing in the *Toronto Star* (February 18), Richard Gwyn imagined what would happen if the dictator of "Lower Volta" acquired a nuclear missile by smuggling diamonds, despite the U.N. sanctions imposed because of the ethnic cleansing that brought him to power:

> The U.N. is only an irritant . . . Your real object of anger is the United States, which insisted on the sanctions despite Russian and Chinese concerns about state sovereignty. So you set up your missile in the jungle and get your scientists to aim it at Washington. Then you push the button. About 20 minutes later, half of Washington is devastated. About 15 minutes after that, all of Lower Volta, including you, disappears from the map.

Substitute a "rogue state" like North Korea, Libya, Iran, or Iraq, says Gwyn, and you have the entire intellectual and geopolitical justification for the NMD system that President Bush intends to build:

> It's absurd. It's laughable. It's surreal. Why would the leader of any of these backward, near-bankrupt, states commit suicide, even if, as is highly improbable, any of them could ever actually lob a missile across the Atlantic or Pacific? Yet Bush and his highly praised cabinet team (they are capable; they are experienced) all take this seriously. The only question about NMD, they insist, is not whether, but when.

"It's not certain that Bush's foreign policy will be less activist than Clinton's," Gwyn concludes. "Keep your seat belts buckled." Robert Fisk agrees. Writing in the London *Independent* (February 18), he compared the recently renewed Anglo-American war against Iraq to "Airstrip One" and its perpetual war with Eastasia:

> As in 1984, the characters in 2001 do not change. In 1991, defence secretary Dick Cheney and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell were urging the bombers on to Baghdad with the backing of President George Bush. In 2001, Vice President Dick Cheney and secretary of state Colin Powell are urging the bombers on to Baghdad with the backing of President George Bush Jr. In 1991, the Beast of Baghdad was Saddam Hussein. In 2001, the Beast of Baghdad is Saddam Hussein. And woe betide us if we feel like Winston Smith, eternally feeding old newspaper cuttings into the oven. Bin those clippings about how we 'defanged' Saddam in 1991. Forget the UN arms inspectors who would eliminate forever Iraq's 'weapons of mass destruction'. Make no complaint about the half-million Iraqi children who have died under UN sanctions. Destroy all reference to the New World Order. We are engaging—an Orwellian cracker this, from the Pentagon—in 'protective retaliation'.

Fisk ends with a note to Winston Smith: Burn at once all references to George Bush, Sr.'s 1991 call to the people of Iraq to overthrow Saddam and his subsequent willingness to let Saddam massacre the lot.

The thinking Tories' in-house rag, the *Salisbury Review*, provides a final thought. Andrew Fear reminds us that the story of the emperor's new clothes warns us that it pays to look beyond the "facts" of the day, as they often prove illusory. Take, for example, NATO, whose *raison d'être* has collapsed:

> One solution to this dilemma would have been to hold a celebration party and then to disband the organisation amid heartening thoughts of a job well done . . . In the event, as we all know, this was not the road chosen . . . A new NATO (a phrase found in NATO publications) was invented. This new NATO has performed an astounding[ly] successful sleight of hand on the general public. While retaining the outward trappings of its predecessor, it has undergone an astonishing transformation to the extent that its underlying thinking is now far more like its old rival, the Warsaw Pact, than that of its previous incarnation . . . NATO has decided to take for itself a global role. Gone are the strict limits on spheres of operation. Gone too is the notion of a defensive alliance as has been seen in the Kosovo debacle.

These changes are sinister enough, Fear admonishes, but beneath them lies an even greater problem. Cold War NATO was an organization dedicated to the preservation of national sovereignty, while the new NATO is deeply hostile to it:

> The Cold War was fought to preserve our right to choose our own form of government. NATO was a means to that end, not an end in itself, and that end has been fulfilled . . . [N]ew NATO's globalist aspirations are an aspect of American geopolitics espoused by both right and left in that country . . . Surely now is time to formulate a new defence policy, or rather restate that Britain wishes to have a defence policy—a policy which looks to defend the nation from others and to further the national interest abroad—and not an offense policy whose aim is to attack others who have done us no harm in the interests of a third party.

This salient point is deemed not so much "unfit to print" as unfit even to acknowledge (let alone respond to), by Messrs. Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Armitage, *et al.* c

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RELIGION

Catholic Rome

by Roberto de Mattei

St. Thomas Aquinas maintains that our intellect cannot grasp anything except through our senses. Recognizing this truth is essential to understanding the city of Rome and—beyond Rome—the Catholic Church, because Rome means nothing without the Church, and the Church loses her identity if is deprived of her Roman character.

The Church has five characteristics: She is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. The final characteristic both summarizes and condenses the previous ones: The Church is Roman. Her Roman character is tantamount to the Church's dimension as an institution.

The most noble description of the Church is the Mystical Body of Christ; this definition refers to the spiritual and supernatural dimension of the Church. But the Church itself has a body, an historical institution that receives life from her spirit but is as necessary as the spirit to the life of the organism as a whole. This institution is the papacy.

Today, much is said about the pope as a *person*, and perhaps no other pope has been the subject of as much literature as John Paul II—an exceptional figure, with such an overwhelming personality that it makes us forget about the institution behind the man. The *institution* is not this or that pope but the papacy—established by Jesus Christ to perpetuate His historical mission until the end of time.

The symbolic language of the Church—the liturgy—reminds us not only of her mystical dimension but of her institutional dimension. A ritual dating back to the days of the early Church, the pontifical coronation (the imposition of the tiara after the election of the pope by the cardinals in conclave) best expresses the essence and significance of the papacy as an institution.

The Catholic Church is a monarchical institution. Among the prophetic words in the Scriptures concerning our Lord, we find that it was prophesied of Him that He should be a king, that He should rule the nations, that He should wear a crown. He transmitted His headship and His office to the Church. One of the privileges that He conferred upon His vicar was that he, too, should wear a crown.

The first coronation took place before A.D. 700, and the ceremony may date back to the early Constantinian era. The last pontifical coronation was that of Paul VI, on June 30, 1963, nine days after his election. Among the first decisions Paul VI made was the abolition of the *flabelli*, canopy, gestatorial chair, and the tiara itself—the very coronation ceremony.

The tiara is a cylindrical headdress, pointed at the top and surrounded by three crowns, which the pope wears as a symbol of sovereignty. It may be derived from the miter of the high priest of ancient Israel, or it may be a transformation of the Phrygian cap supposedly given by Constantine to Pope Silvester as symbol of the new freedom of the Church.

The conic miter, or *mitra turbinata*, which was worn by the ante-Nicene popes, had a golden crown at its base. This was eventually doubled to show that the pope had not only spiritual primacy but the canonical right to invest the emperor. The third crown was added by the Avignon pope to symbolize the Roman state.

Theologically, the three crowns represent the papal power over the three Churches (militant, purifying, and triumphant); and the threefold authority of the Church (magisterium, order, and jurisdiction); and the three missions exerted by Jesus Christ as prophet, priest, and king. During the coronation Mass, a week after the election, while the choir sang the antiphon *Corona aurea super caput eius* ("The crown of gold upon his head"), the cardinal removed the miter from the pope's head. Then, coming to the front of the balcony, the cardinal replaced it with the papal tiara and addressed the new pope with these words:

> Receive the tiara adorned with the three crowns and know that you are the Father of princes and kings, the Sovereign of the world, and the Vicar on earth of our Savior Jesus Christ, to Whom is honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The pope's coronation does not create his authority; this begins at the moment he accepts his election. However, the abolition of the coronation ceremony contributed to a diminution of the pontiff's power. This liturgical act incarnates the principle of pontifical sovereignty and expresses his *suprema majestas* (supreme authority) and *plenitudo potestatis* (the fullness of power). What is the foundation of the pontifical sovereignty expressed by the coronation ceremony?

Christ is the invisible Head of the Church. But since the Church was founded also as a *visible* society on this earth, she was to have a *visible* head—the vicar of Christ. Jesus Christ accorded this governing power to a single person, placing St. Peter as the foundation of His Church and tasking him with the government of all communities. The fulfillment of Christ's prophecy regarding the change of Simon's name to Peter (which in Greek means "rock" or "stone") took place on a memorable occasion in Caesarea Philippi, when Jesus clearly expressed the reason for the new name, promising Peter supreme authority over the Church. As St. Matthew writes:

> Jesus saith to them: But who do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus, answering, said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in Heaven.

This confession is formally approved and immediately rewarded by our Lord when He replies (Matthew 16: 18-19):

> Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against her. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

The tradition of the Church has always affirmed that Peter, the fisherman from Galilee chosen by Christ to feed

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s lambs, came to the capital of the Roman empire to proclaim the Gospel. During Nero's reign, he underwent the martyrdom of the cross, like his Divine Master. Peter was martyred in Nero's circus at the Vatican and buried nearby.

As a man, Peter lived and died like the rest of the saints and apostles; as Pope, St. Peter remains at the center of the Church, through his pastoral ministry and supreme religious authority. St. Peter did not receive the promises of the pontificate for himself, but for the good of the Roman Church. Since the Church must last until the end of the world, the ministry of Peter survived him in order to safeguard the Church over the centuries. The pope is bishop of Rome insofar as he is the successor of Peter, and is pope insofar as he is bishop of Rome. But the bishop of the See of Rome is also bishop of the world. The Roman Church is the mother and mistress of all the churches of the world.

The pope's primacy is his supreme power in all of his spiritual jurisdiction, his capacity as head of the Catholic Church, bishop of bishops, prince of pastors, successor to St. Peter, and vicar of Christ on earth. This power is not simply *primus inter pares* (the first among peers), whereby he would enjoy a formal preeminence over the other bishops. It is a *real* authority extending over all the members of the Church and—without exception—pertaining not only to allegiance and respect, but to submission. The keys, the emblem of sovereignty, have been given to St. Peter alone, and through him to the Roman pontiff, who possesses plenary, entire, and independent authority, and *has no superior on earth*.

Christ might have selected another form of government, instituting the visible Church as a democracy or an aristocracy. The practical question, however, is not what Christ *might* have done, but what Christ *actually did*.

In a monarchy, one person possesses supreme power. He has direct and immediate rule over all subjects within his kingdom, whether as individuals or as a body. Christ tempered monarchy with an aristocracy, so it is not in the power of the supreme ruler to abolish those inferior rulers whose power was equally of divine origin. Pontificate and episcopate both belong to the internal constitution of the invisible Church. Neither can cease to exist if the Church is to endure as instituted by Christ. Pontificate without episcopate would not constitute the Church; nor would episcopate without pontificate.

Plenitude of power to rule a society of men includes legislative power, judicial power, and coercive power. *Legislative* power is the authority to make the laws by which a society is governed. If laws are universal, they can be made only by a universal or supreme ruler. If laws are particular—binding only a part of society—they may be made by the ruler who has the power to govern that part. The supreme pontiff alone, as universal ruler, has power to make a universal law, to bind the universal Church. It is not in the power either of any individual bishop, or of all the bishops in one body, to make a universal law. Church councils are called by the pope, and the pope must promulgate their conclusions before they become laws of the Church.

Every bishop is, nevertheless, a lawgiver within his own limits. He has jurisdiction over his subjects, and his jurisdiction includes the legislative authority by which his flock is to be governed. He has neither the right nor the authority to make a law to govern other flocks, nor to make a universal law.

Judicial power is a necessary consequence of legislative power because, in the application of laws, there may be controversy. For the decision of a controversy, there must be a judge. All judges are not equal in their judicial authority. The sentence of a lower judge may be appealed to a higher judge; the judgment of a supreme judge is, however, a peremptory judgment, from which there can be no appeal. Bishops are therefore *true* judges, but not *supreme*; their judgments are *true* judgments, although they are not *peremptory*. They may be reversed on appeal to higher judges whose judgments may, in turn, be reversed on final appeal to the sovereign pontiff who is, by institution of Christ, the supreme judge from whose judgment there is no appeal. *Sedes Apostolica a nemine judicatur*—the Apostolic See is, and can be, judged by no man.

A ruler of men must also have *coercive* power; otherwise, laws will be made in vain, and the execution of judgments will not be secured. A law must have its sanction in a threatened punishment, and he who threatens must have the power to inflict. This power, as it is a power to bind, is possessed by the pontiff because it was, in its fullness, bestowed on Peter.

Bishops also possess coercive power; but, like their legislative and judicial powers, it has limits. Even within those limits, it is dependent on the power that is independent and supreme. The pontiff's power is independent of every other power on earth. What he binds on earth, no man can loose; what he looses on earth, no man can bind. Christ gave the Keys of His Kingdom—the visible Church on earth—to the pontificate, not the episcopate. These principles were proclaimed a dogma of the Catholic faith by Pius IX at the First Vatican Council in 1870. This proclamation came to assume paramount importance, enabling Pius's successors to fend off attempts to behead the Church of her supreme authority and to turn her into a democratic and egalitarian ecclesiastical society.

Understanding the significance of pontifical sovereignty is important not only for Catholics, but for all who value authority and order—especially today, in a world sinking into chaos. We face an unprecedented offensive against the sovereignty of nation-states and, indeed, the principle of sovereignty itself. Globalization and separatist movements join forces in dismantling nation-states, which are seen as transitional historical phenomena, bound to disappear. This process applies to the Church as well, where progressive theologians argue that pontifical primacy is an expression of an outdated concept of sovereignty. The papacy and the Church, they assert, need democratic and egalitarian reform; the monarchical and hierarchical structure of the Church should go the way of the vanishing nation-states.

Still, the principle of sovereignty flows directly from human nature; neither political nor ecclesiastical society may renounce this principle without falling into anarchy and chaos.

The liturgy and ritual of the Church—the visible expressions of her life—are today often neglected and unappreciated within the Catholic Church; nonetheless, they help us comprehend more deeply not only the relevance of the Church's eternal message, but the significance of the principles and institutions on which civil society is founded.

Roberto de Mattei, a professor of history at the University of Monte Cassino, is the author of eight books, most recently Pio IX. *This article is drawn from a speech he delivered at The Rockford Institute's January 2001 Convivium in Rome.*

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Church Arsons: The Real Story?

by Mark Tooley

It was one of the biggest stories of 1996: Black churches were burning all across the South, the seeming victims of a nationwide upsurge in racial hatred. Tens of thousands of horrified Americans rushed to contribute money toward the reconstruction of black churches.

We now know there never was any firm evidence of a church-arson epidemic and *no evidence* of a racist conspiracy aimed at black churches. We also know that a significant chunk of the millions of dollars raised for church reconstruction never actually went for bricks and mortar.

It appears that the church-arson story, whose primary promoter was the National Council of Churches (NCC), was used—at least in part—as a fundraising tool to forestall the NCC's impending financial collapse.

At the time of the story's debut, the insurance industry estimated that 490 churches typically burn in an average year. Since an estimated 20 percent of all churches are predominantly black, it would be expected that close to 100 black churches would burn annually. Nobody then (or since) ever claimed that anywhere near 100 black churches burned in a single year.

This discrepancy did not deter the NCC, which successfully touted the church-arson story to the media in 1996. The NCC quickly established the Burned Churches Fund, which became the most successful fundraising effort for burned churches. The fund included not only the NCC's 30-plus Protestant denominations but also the U.S. Catholic Conference and Jewish groups.

The Burned Churches Fund was fantastically successful, raising over $10.8 million in cash, along with at least $3.4 million more in in-kind donations. But of the $10.8 million, only $6.6 million can be accounted for in grants for church construction. The NCC has not fully explained what happened to the remaining $4.2 million.

In late 1999, when the Burned Churches Fund was shut down, the NCC's own auditor questioned the transfer of the remaining $330,000 to the NCC's general administration. The NCC has been wracked by deficit spending for years. In 1997, it suffered a $1.6 million deficit; in 1998, it endured a $1.5 million loss. Last year, when the Burned Churches Fund's fundraising had virtually come to a halt, the NCC fell short nearly $4 million, precipitating a major reorganization for America's oldest and largest ecumenical organization. In just a few years, the NCC's reserves (once $15 million) have been spent down to three million dollars.

The NCC had originally claimed that 15 percent of the Burned Churches Fund would go toward administration and programs to combat the "root causes" of racism. This provision set off fears among conservative critics that church-reconstruction money would fund left-wing political activities. They were right: Some did. But in the end, most of the rerouted money seems to have gone toward a far more banal activity: propping up the NCC's failing administrative infrastructure.

Including in-kind assistance—mostly construction materials—the fund raised about $14.2 million; 15 percent would be $2.4 million. This contrasts with the $4.2 million that appears to have been spent on non-construction activities, or about 38 percent of the cash raised.

Last year, NCC General Secretary Joan Brown Campbell, who had been the Burned Churches Fund's chief cheerleader, retired under a cloud amid growing deficits and financial upheaval. The NCC's largest member, the United Methodist Church, even briefly cut off its funding in an effort to compel the NCC to repair its tattered finances and clean up its books. Over the last year, several of the largest member denominations have been asked to help with the NCC's multimillion-dollar bailout.

Still trying to repair the damage, NCC General Secretary Bob Edgar is cutting 17 positions from its staff of 64, and he has proposed dissolving the NCC in favor of a larger ecumenical umbrella that would include evangelicals and Roman Catholics. Some NCC insiders have privately raised the possibility that the NCC will collapse in the next year or two. That collapse might have happened several years ago if it weren't for the money raised for the Burned Churches Fund.

Although some money from the Burned Churches Fund was to have been spent on anti-racism programs, administration appears to have eaten up the bulk of the money. The NCC had promised a series of anti-racism conferences around the country. Only a few were held, drawing small crowds. To date, the NCC has refused to conduct an audit of the Burned Churches Fund. A final budget report was given to the NCC's General Assembly last year, but it accounted for only $6.4 million in grants for church reconstruction. It made no mention of the $3.4 million in in-kind gifts, nor of the $2.6 million apparently spent on overhead and political action.

Meanwhile, the NCC's incendiary claims about black church arsons continue to be undermined by more responsible documentation. In its 2000 annual report, the National Church Arson Task Force found that most churches suffering arson have been white, not black. And no more than ten percent of those arrested for arson have shown enough evidence of racial motivation to merit prosecution for hate crimes.

In a more comprehensive report on overall numbers, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) estimates that church arsons increased from 450 in 1995 to 570 in 1996. (The NFPA does not analyze the racial composition of burned churches.) The increase took place within an overall *decrease* in church arsons over the last 20 years. The number for 1996 is in fact identical to the number of church arsons estimated to have occurred in 1993. And arsons for each of the 12 preceding years were even higher, decreasing from a high of 1,320 in 1981. In 1997, the last year for which an estimate has been made, the NFPA believes there were 390 arsons, a continuation of the downward trend.

The advocates of the church-arson story claim the upswing in attacks on black churches began in the early 1990's—a claim that the NFPA's report would seem to refute. The only annual increase over the last 20 years in overall church arsons occurred in 1996, when the media hype began. It is not a stretch to speculate that copycat crimes could be the explanation.

The federal task force, along with some media outlets, has reported that the most prolific church arsonist over the last five years has not been a racist but a practicing Satanist. Jay Scott Ballinger pleaded guilty in July 2000 to torching 26 churches in at least eight states between 1994 and 1999. He and his girlfriend have claimed responsibility for attacks on 50 churches. So far, there is no word from the NCC or other church groups about initiating any programs against the followers of Satan, who apparently are not a concern to them.

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The task force claims to have participated in the conviction of 305 defendants onnected to 224 arsons or bombings. As he task force points out in a news release, his arrest rate of 36.2 percent is more than twice the national average for arson cases. About one-third of the 948 arsons tracked by the task force since 1995 involved black churches. But the task force does not claim to have a complete list of church arsons. It is probable that churches suspecting a racist motivation were more likely to report their losses to the task force than ones that suspect mundane vandalism.

Even in the South, there is no evidence from the task force that black churches were more vulnerable than white churches. According to the task force, 44 percent of church arsons in the South were at black churches, and 56 percent were at white churches. But approximately 40 percent of Southern churches are predominantly black.

Of the 136 people arrested for arsons at black churches, 85 were white, 50 were black, and one was Hispanic. Thirty-seven whites were charged with hate crimes because there was evidence of a racial motivation for their attack upon black churches. Only six of those 37 had ties to an organized hate group. The majority of church arsonists of all races seem to have been motivated by pyromania, vandalism, burglary, or insurance fraud.

It's hard to call the church-arson story of 1996 a complete fraud. Yes, black churches were burned and continue to burn. And yes, some arsonists have been motivated by racial hatred. But there is no compelling evidence to show that black churches were any more vulnerable to attack over the last decade than non-black churches.

The arson story was created, in part, by a failing church group trying to revive its sagging political and financial fortunes. But the NCC remains on the brink of collapse. One of its final legacies may be the creation of a myth that needlessly incited racial fears and raised millions of dollars under false pretenses.

Mark Tooley is a research associate at the Institute on Religion and Democracy in Washington, D.C.

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EDUCATION

A Confederacy of Dunces

by Philip Jenkins

The death of a social movement is an instructive and sobering phenomenon. After years of greatness and influence, an idea eventually sickens and dies, until its adherents are reduced to a pathetic handful. Somewhere in history, there must have lived the last Albigensian, the last Ranter, the last native practitioner of ancient Egyptian religion. Somewhere in the not-too-distant future, this select band of ultimate diehards will be joined by yet another, when Marxism breathes its last. And while I do not know the name of the last Marxist, I can, with some confidence, identify the profession of this heroic loser: He or she will unquestionably teach humanities at an American university—and almost certainly in the history department.

Academic historians rarely make much impact on the wider world, which explains why the public at large generally pays so little attention to their weird and wonderful tribal practices. Over the last year or two, however, historians have ventured beyond the forest clearing and into public view, and the sight has been something to behold. I suppose the new age started in the mid-1990's with the controversy over the Smithsonian's scheme for a revisionist exhibit of the *Enola Gay*, which condemned the U.S. decision to drop the atomic bomb. Crucial to the controversy was the exhibit's insanely inaccurate projection of the number of casualties the Allies were likely to incur in an invasion of Japan. The Smithsonian said the figure for American dead would be "only" about 30,000, while most competent scholars suggested figures closer to a half-million. Though the exhibit was (very properly) closed down, the affair lingers in liberal mythology as a victory by ignorant racist yahoos over sound scholarship.

Shortly afterward, the once-respected scholar John Hope Franklin agreed to chair President Clinton's ludicrous inquiry into American race relations, which was deputed to explore any avenues whatever, as long as they placed enough emphasis on white guilt and provided ammunition for expanding affirmative-action policies. (You remember the "National Dialogue.") Then, vast numbers of historians chose to sign pro-Clinton petitions during the impeachment crisis, all basically swearing to assertions about the origins of impeachment that were contrary to fact. In 2000, the Organization of American Historians (OAH) went into a spasm of New Left revivalism when it turned out that the group had chosen to hold its annual convention at the Adam's Mark Hotel in St. Louis, although the hotel chain was under attack over dubious charges concerning civil-rights violations.

The 2000 election really brought the professors out of the woodwork when Princeton professor Sean Wilentz organized breathless anti-Bush petitions that even middle-of-the-road liberal media thought hysterical. (The fate of American democracy allegedly stood or fell on whether Florida's Palm Beach County was allowed to vote again, presumably until a Democratic majority was secured.) Most recently (in January), almost 500 historians signed a petition shrieking about the Bush victory and complaining that the majority on the U.S. Supreme Court "acted as it did in order to install a Republican president and to expand its political position on the Court." The historians professed themselves "outraged and saddened at this wound inflicted upon American democracy." The letter was signed by some of the biggest names in the field, including Lizabeth Cohen of Harvard, Todd Gitlin of New York University, David Brion Davis of Yale, George Frederickson of Stanford, and—of course—the ineffable Wilentz. Incidentally, all of those named are not only solid historians but can actually write very well, and, presumably, can read.

Several observations come to mind about these eruptions: Most obviously, the fact that historians can make such screaming misstatements about a well-known contemporary event casts an utterly damning light on their critical abilities to explore the remoter past. All the readers of the election protests lived through the events concerned and have at least as much knowledge of what went on as the professors. Wilentz and his merry men are not claiming that they had personal access to secret documents from the World League of Racists, Homophobes, and Other Bad People, order-

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ing the U.S. Supreme Court to fix the election for Boy George. They are just relying on media sources, the same as the rest of us. If they are willing to base themselves entirely on one-sided *parti pris* documents to reconstruct the affairs of *anno* 2000, what earthly hope do we have that they will be more perceptive when studying the issues of 1800 or 1900, let alone any earlier period?

The recent upsurge of activism among the workers, peasants, and professors indicates a distressing herd mentality, a willingness to sign basically anything that comes from History Central, so long as it gives people the sense that they are fighting the good fight. The event arouses a powerful temptation to wreak upon historians the same dirty trick that a mischievous soul performed upon the British Young Liberals in the 1970's, persuading most of the party's annual convention to sign a heartfelt declaration of support for the oppressed people of the Republic of Santa Clara. (Since no such state exists, the Santa Clarans are, perforce, not oppressed.)

Just what is wrong with the historical profession? I can give a short answer: Particularly in American history, the profession is dominated by people whose ideas were formed in the social struggles of the late 1960's and early 1970's, and who have not noticed that the world has since changed. Obviously, a large proportion of the current historical profession grew up after the Nixon years, but they remain true to what seems to them a golden age of activism. Accordingly, their response to events is largely Pavlovian, and they are still trying to answer questions that were not terribly relevant even in 1970. For example, we might look at Lizabeth Cohen, the first name on the recent election petition. Her major book is called *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919-1939* (Cambridge, 1990), and it assembles a good deal of useful information. Her theme, however, is that vital issue that so greatly agitates the American masses at the start of the 21st century—namely, class formation. The same riveting theme stirred Wilentz to write his best-known work, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850* (Oxford, 1986). It's a good read despite the sub-Marxist intellectual framework—certainly not *because* of it.

Once we realize that many American historians have not progressed intellectually beyond 1974 or so, we can easily appreciate their areas of concern. Race, above all, agitates them: In their minds, it has only been five or ten years since the Selma march, and black Americans are still pretty much where they were during the King years. Given this sense of drama and urgency, it is not surprising that racial themes permeate their literature. Also—remember, we are still mentally in the Nixon years—there are all sorts of new and thrilling debates concerning women's liberation, and even gay liberation. (Tired? Who said these themes were tired?)

If you think I'm exaggerating, just look at a typical year's output of the *Journal of American History*, the official organ of the OAH, published in four hefty numbers annually. The March 2000 issue devoted half its space to a round table on the theme of ethnicity and race, with such groundbreaking studies as "Japanese American Resettlement and Community in Chicago 1942-45." All the articles in the June issue were about ethnicity, race, and slavery, and a special section celebrated the lifetime achievements of Herbert Aptheker, the unrepentant doyen of American communist historians. September brought a refreshing change of theme, with a focus on "gender" issues, feminism, contraception, and theories of masculinity. Readers feeling deprived of their regular racial fix would have been delighted to pick up the December issue, with its major study of race and slavery. Specifically, this number devoted a round table to the question of whether Cinqué, leader of the legendary *Amistad* slave revolt, was himself a slave trader. The issue was topped off with an article examining "the new disability history," which is currently enjoying something of an academic vogue.

The journal's emphases are neatly epitomized by the front covers of the year's four issues, which depicted Los Angeles's Little Tokyo; an African-American teacher in a one-room schoolhouse; a cartoon about Victorian feminist and birth-control advocate Victorian Woodhull; and an outrageously idealized Cinqué. In the eyes of the historical profession's establishment, that seems to represent a pretty complete spectrum of American life, past and present. Is there anything or anyone they might have omitted here?

Nor are these weird concentrations peculiar to the JAH. If anything, the rather more prestigious *American Historical Review* (AHR) is even quirkier. Highlights of their 2000 issues include one massiv "forum" section on "gender" and mas culinity in Chinese history; another fo rum on contemporary histories of slavery and a lengthy article on Maya revivalism that was largely a puff piece for the contemporary Zapatista rebels in the Mexican province of Chiapas.

Putting the main journals together, we can see that "mainstream" American history today—what successful historians actually do—is overwhelmingly concerned with what would once have been viewed as the extreme margins: radical and feminist history, racial and sexual minorities, and other marginal groups. There is nothing wrong with any of these interests (heaven knows, I myself work a great deal in the margins, and indeed beyond them) but the problem comes when the margins are seen as the whole of the American experience. It's even worse when historians adopt such an activist stance toward their subjects. They are not writing the history of contraception, which anyone will admit is an important topic, but rather studying how women struggled heroically against male oppression. (I offer a representative quotation from one article in the September 2000 issue of JAH, p. 459: "Such letters offer more than a touching tribute to the determination of women and men in late nineteenth century America to restrict their fertility.") Especially in racial matters, history is recounted in starkly ideological terms, with heroes and villains, good guys and bad guys. Competing views are not simply excluded; they are left unconsidered. History is a weapon for social activism, and historians are soldiers in the liberation struggle.

Given the power of the social mythologies through which American history is read (and misread), we can scarcely wonder at the joy with which practitioners greet anything that can be taken, however implausibly, as a repetition of past horrors. The Adam's Mark affair? A chance to stand again at Selma. The 2000 election? We'll fight *Dred Scott* afresh, and this time, we'll win. Just don't bother me with facts: I'm an American historian.

Philip Jenkins is the author, most recently, of Hidden Gospels: How the Quest for Jesus Lost Its Way *(Oxford University Press).*

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In The Dark

by George McCartney

Dinner Is Served

The original newspaper advertisements for *Hannibal* (director Ridley Scott's adaptation of Thomas Harris's novel) displayed a ghoulish-looking close up of the eponymous protagonist, a more-than-usually mad psychiatrist who has an unfortunate penchant for dining on his patients. In the person of Anthony Hopkins, Hannibal the Cannibal glared at us malevolently, a crazed smile creasing his aging face.

A week into the film's run, however, the picture changed. Now, we see Hopkins standing by a candlelit dinner table regarding Clarice Starling (Julianne Moore), the FBI agent with whom he's conducted a cat-and-mouse relationship since they met in *The Silence of the Lambs*. She sits across from him in an elegant evening dress as he thoughtfully prepares her meal. Despite his evident attention to her needs, she stares past him into the middle distance, seemingly indifferent to his labors. It might as well be a scene from *The Remains of the Day*, in which Hopkins played the perfectly servile butler—a man self-effacingly dedicated to caring for his masters. Now, we may assume his masters are MGM studio executives—if not the paying public at large. They have ordered him to whip up a little something to set their jaded palates atingle once more. The resulting concoction involves a particularly outré variant of cannibalism that has sent audiences out of the theater indiscreetly abuzz (hence the new ad). Rather than think it a liability, MGM has chosen to take full advantage of this widespread disclosure of the film's denouement. "Come back for a second helping," one version coyly urges.

If you happen to be among those still unfamiliar with the film's excesses, you may want to skip the next five paragraphs, since I will be addressing them in some detail.

Scott's previous film, *Gladiator*, contained plenty of violence, but it was all a matter of sleight-of-hand suggestion carried off ingeniously with quicksilver editing. Here, however, he has called upon his special-effects technicians to shove blood and viscera in our faces. As in the novel, Dr. Lecter comes out of retirement to revenge the sullied honor of his reluctant protégé, Clarice. At considerable risk to himself—including being set upon by a herd of flesh-eating hogs—he finally accomplishes his gallant mission. He captures (and terminally discomfits) Clarice's arch-tormentor, Paul Krendler (Ray Liotta), whose offenses are as much political as criminal.

Hannibal

Produced and Distributed by
Dino De Laurentiis and MGM Studios
Directed by Ridley Scott
Screenplay by David Mamet
and Steven Zaillian
from the novel by Thomas Harris

Last Resort

Produced by the British
Broadcasting Corporation
Directed by Paul Pavlikovsky
Screenplay by Rowan Joffe
and Paul Pavlikovsky
Released by The Shooting Gallery

In order to advance his own interests, Krendler, a careerist in the Department of Justice, planted evidence that compromised Clarice's professional integrity and forced the FBI to suspend her. Worse, he's made unwanted passes at her and disparaged women in general, claiming they're better suited to taking dictation than conducting investigations. Further, he assumes Lecter is "queer" because he's interested in such "artsy-fartsy stuff" as chamber music and Renaissance painting. For these crimes, Krendler gets his head handed to him—literally. First, Lecter drugs him, then saws off his skullcap. Next, he sits Krendler down to a dinner of morsels taken from his own brain. With each slice of gray matter removed from Krendler's head, the unfortunate agent loses more and more of his mind, until he begins jabbering crudely and breaks into a childlike rendition of "Swinging on a Star." This grisly scene is staged to make Lecter's revenge on behalf of his Clarice seem both laudable and amusing. Although there were screams and groans at the showing I attended, I also heard chuckling and even a smattering of applause. Of course: Here was a homophobic male chauvinist being literally reduced to the idiot he had already proved himself to be culturally. There's modern justice for you! Hate-criminals, beware!

There is something fundamentally askew about this narrative's premise: Dr. Lecter is a monster who murders wantonly, but we are encouraged to admire him. The word "monster," by the way, appears in the novel when the narrator grandly informs us that

> there is no consensus in the psychiatric community that Dr. Lecter should be termed a man. He has long been regarded by his professional peers in psychiatry . . . as something entirely Other. For convenience they call him "monster."

Harris, of course, has another term in mind. He's made Lecter a superman in the Nietzschean sense: an individual who exists far beyond the petty parameters of good and evil. Yes, he kills, but his victims are invariably contemptible. They're men who lack cultivation, especially regarding their relations with women. There's the wretched Krendler, for one; but we are also treated to his opposite, a middle-aged Italian policeman (Giancarlo Giannini), married to a much younger woman whom he indulges uxoriously for fear of losing her. Each, in his own way, has objectified women and therefore deserves death at Lecter's avenging hands. The doctor, you see, is an aesthete who can't abide unseemly behavior. He is also a man of uncompromising taste (so to speak). He once killed an inferior flute player in the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra to make room for someone more talented. As a playful grace note, he fed the musician's remains—suitably disguised—to the orchestra's board of directors.

What are we to conclude? That being guilty of bad manners and exhibiting poor taste are capital crimes? Sounds like a higher order of fascism, a call to cleanse

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the species of its louts. Louts may be troubling, but filleting them wholesale seems a trifle draconian. Besides, how appetizing would they be?

This kind of thing might work as comedy *noir*; but the script, crafted by the usually reliable David Mamet, is singularly witless, and the novel is even worse. Harris takes Lecter so seriously that he has him setting up house with Starling in the last pages—the prince of evil marrying the princess of virtue. Call me bourgeois, but I never did like William Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, and I like this version even less.

Last Resort, a very different kind of film, also features a dinner, but it's considerably more wholesome than *Hannibal*'s. The host is a lower-class Brit named Alfie (Paddy Considine), whose culinary aspirations never get more exotic than Indian takeout. Compared to the cultivated Lecter, however, Alfie exhibits a moral character that is immeasurably more palatable.

Alfie lives in Stonehaven (actually Margate), a seedy English seaside resort town where he manages a gaudy pier-side arcade. A former prizefighter of minor distinction, he seems as rough as his habitual day-old beard. But when a young, destitute Russian refugee and her 12-year-old son happen upon his establishment, he rises gallantly to their rescue. He feeds them vindaloo and teaches the boy the finer points of electronic pinball. He's not very cultivated, but his concern for the two displaced people is sincere. Though his interest is at first provoked by the woman's comeliness, this chap is a natural gentleman and would never insist on a sexual *quid pro quo* for his assistance. Although the mother doesn't respond at first to his romantic overtures and Alfie comes to suspect she never will, he continues to help her and her son negotiate the various pitfalls of his working-class neighborhood.

Written and directed by Polish documentarian Paul Pavlikovsky, *Last Resort* doesn't have much of a plot, but its texture is unusually compelling. It begins with Tanya (Dina Korzun), the mother, arriving at Heathrow Airport with her son Artyom (Artyom Strelnikov). She has come from Moscow expecting to be met by her fiancé, but he never shows up. With only $85 to her name and no prospects, she finds herself caught in the toils of the British customs system. Afraid she'll be deported, she impulsively requests political asylum, only to find herself promptly bused to the aptly named Stonehaven, which serves as a "designated holding area" for refugees. This scruffy town features an abandoned amusement park still emblazoned with a sign reading "Dreamland Welcomes You." The dream, however, turns out to be thoroughly Orwellian. She and her son are assigned a ratty council flat in a hideous poured-concrete high-rise. They're monitored everywhere they go by cameras mounted on barbed-wire fences. When she discovers they will have to stay there for at least 12 to 18 months, she tries to escape to London. Suddenly, police appear to tell her there are no trains running to the city. She's trapped in a bureaucratically contrived limbo all too reminiscent of the life she had known in Russia.

Meanwhile, the men of the neighborhood begin to take notice of her. She's approached by Les, who calls himself Mr. Stonehaven. With a show of oily kindness, he offers her work as a performer on his internet porn site. Studying her with a professional eye, he concludes that she could portray an innocent schoolgirl type—a real draw for the paying "punters" who, he proudly declares, use his service around the globe. Meanwhile, Artyom has fallen in with some local children, drinking and thieving with them at night. Desperate, Tanya turns to selling her blood—the one replenishable commodity the poor have to offer—to nurses who circulate through the neighborhood in a van.

Pavlikovsky's critique of capitalism goes unspoken. He uses his camera to suggest that, while people may flee the East's stifling socialism, the West's free-market alternative is little better. The system encourages people to package and market themselves. This implied moral equivalence between East and West seems overly facile. But it's a momentary lapse that doesn't subvert the film's larger intentions. In the end, Pavlikovsky wants to convince us that chivalry is still possible in our seemingly hardhearted, regimented world. Alfie's no-strings decency demonstrates what a good man of ordinary means can accomplish when he puts his mind to helping those less fortunate than himself. Pavlikovsky doesn't make the mistake of equating realism with bleakness.

Then there is Pavlikovsky's extraordinary visual style. Shooting his opening scenes in extreme closeup, he makes us feel Tanya's entrapment by having her and her son always seem to be pressing against the tight confines of the screen's frame. Later, they walk along the beach with Alfie during a gale. In the background, white-capped waves scud relentlessly in the opposite direction, and we can see that these are people perpetually battered by forces—natural and political—beyond their understanding. Perhaps the most striking shot is one that appears twice: Tanya and Artyom sit together in an airport shuttle train, silently leaning against one another, their faces impassive as the vehicle whisks them along. Pavlikovsky shoots them from below with their backs against the all-glass enclosure at the rear of the car. They seem to be sailing through empty space entirely unsupported, utterly alone, and profoundly vulnerable—a simple shot conveying instantly and devastatingly a poignancy nearly inexpressible in words.

Pavlikovsky is an artist who deserves our attention. I urge you to make the *Last Resort* your first.

c

LIBERAL ARTS

WHO COULD HAVE GUESSED?

"Priests of the Afro-Cuban Santeria religion have prophesied a potentially turbulent 2001 for Cuba and the world, including stormy weather, threat of war, migratory chaos, marriage woes and growing promiscuity."

—from "Santeria Priests Predict Stormy, Lusty 2001," Reuters (January 4, 2001)

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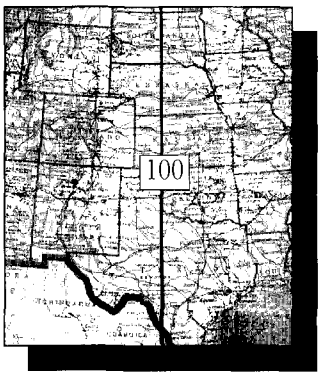
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Now Hear This!!!

ou could say it isn't easy being a liberal i the most conservative state in the Inion if it weren't for the fact that in the nost conservative state in the Union, the iberals occupy all the best bully pulpits. This means that, in Wyoming as in the est of the 50 states, Democratic liberalsm is the unofficial public philosophy—n spite of Wyoming's congressional delegation being solidly conservative Republican. Though liberals in Wyoming are a small minority, that minority is very *present*, which is why the mood of official gloom prevailing here might suggest to the uninitiated observer that Al Gore, not George Bush, won the presidential election last fall. Lamentation comes largely from distraught environmentalists, who have not been happy campers since the attempted Democratic coup in Florida collapsed in December.

Not counting the election itself, Bush's Cabinet was the first shock. Governor Christie Whitman replacing Carol Browner at the EPA was more or less acceptable to Western environmentalists (she comes to the position from a place called the Garden State, and has no problem with using abortion as a means of population control). Gale Norton replacing St. Bruce the Babbitt, though, was another story, since Norton created a significant paper trail in defense of property rights during her years as Colorado's attorney general (and, before that, in her association with James Watt at the Western States Legal Foundation). Having Agriculture taken away from an urban Jew and entrusted to someone with experience as an agriculturist didn't put smiles on environmentalist faces, either. The *Casper Star-Tribune* (the Wyoming equivalent of the *New York Times*, whose editorial-page editor is a native New Yorker) claims the Republicans are initiating a "Time of the Great Undoing." The Bush administration, the paper warns, intends to open Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Wyoming, and parts of the Lewis and Clark National Forest in Montana to oil exploration and drilling; revoke the ban the National Park Service placed on snowmobiling in Yel-



lowstone Park; and drain the Zuni Salt Lake in New Mexico (where Zuni, Navajo, Hopi, and Acoma Indians gather salt "for religious purposes"). Nay, more (as Mencken liked to say): Republicans on the U.S. House Natural Resources Committee have announced their intention to review all 19 national monuments, and three expansions of monuments, created by President Clinton during his eight years in office. In short, "Republican leaders in Congress and the Bush administration are attempting to unravel the nation's environmental protection laws and the protections granted to some pristine areas of public lands." (No mention that much of the Great Rollback is targeted at Clinton's Great Roll Forward—or Over?—when, in the former president's final days in office, he seemed to be trying to monumentalize everything from himself to the branch creek where Black Elk took his last leak.) The controversy for the most part underscores a longstanding impression that conservatives always think they're right, while liberals believe themselves to be right *and* righteous.

The *Star-Tribune* has been working hard to make the point that "The oil and gas business couldn't have better friends in office than President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney." Maybe it could; then again, maybe it couldn't. But what a stupid time to be making the point, when Californians (by their standard) are freezing in the dark, while Westerners living east of the Sierra Nevada are paying through the nose before, perhaps, suffering the same fate, and the California and United States governments are talking seriously about *importing electrical power from Mexico*! "What was *your* gas bill last month?" is a ubiquitous question in these parts (mine was $320), followed by "How can we have a gas shortage in [expletive deleted] *Wyomin'*? Do you realize this saloon we're settin' in is *built* above a [expletive deleted] *gas bubble*?" The problem, I suppose, is that when you spend most of your life talking with rocks, trees, grizzly bears, and clouds, you forget in time how to communicate effectively with real people.

In an intelligent column in the same paper, two local coauthors, Geoffrey O'Gara and Dan Whipple, argue that

> There seems to be only one relationship possible between the West and the federal government . . . With the ascendancy of the Democrats, Rocky Mountain denizens inevitably charge that the administration has declared "War on the West . . . " In the interregnums between Democratic administrations, however, the West does not declare "peace." Instead, we launch a "Sagebrush Rebellion . . . " It [seems] illogical to fight a War on the West to install your own people and then declare a Sagebrush Rebellion against them once they are *in*.

With George W. Bush succeeding the "Antichrist Bill Clinton" in office, O'Gara and Whipple continue, the rebellion is raising its ugly head once more in Western legislatures. As evidence, they cite a Montana House bill that would require the state attorney general to transfer title to the state of all federal land within its boundaries, a bill in the Utah legislature requiring state approval of the sale of any land to the feds, and a proposal by the Idaho Department of Lands to hand over national forest lands to local communities.

What Whipple and O'Gara miss is that the process they describe is simply two steps forward and one back, which Sagebrush Rebels eternally hope to replace by two steps forward, one ahead—with the help, naturally, of the Republican administration in power. The West is not anti-federal—federalism as it's properly understood, at least—so much as it is anti-Democrat, anti-centralist, and anti-statist; and so the rebellion's re-

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newed legislative assault, following the installation of George II, is intended not as a challenge to the new administration but a facilitator of its agenda regarding the disposition of the public lands in the West, and elsewhere. It makes sense, doesn't it? The columnists suspect that "privatization" is a code word for a sell-off which would be disastrous for the very "agricultural interests" who are loudest in their demands for privatization.

> The first thing [that would happen] is that the bottom would fall out of land prices, destroying the capital value of most existing properties, especially large properties like ranches. And it is unlikely that current ranchers would be able to afford to buy it . . . Exxon, Shell, and dozens of other energy and mineral companies . . . would have real money to spend for that land. So not only would such a sale destroy the value of existing private land, but the lands they [*sic*] now lease would be owned by others who would demand market rates for grazing leases.

But the private-property movement is not just about ownership; it concerns the relationship between citizens and their government, individuals and the mass, man and nature. It has, in other words, to do with human freedom (or Western political philosophy) and man's relationship with the natural world (which is to say, religion). Land set-asides by Washington, D.C., are not ultimately about preservation—saving unspoiled lands for posterity, as statist politicians and bureaucrats assert—but control: managing human resources (people and businesses) the way the Bureau of Land Management and the National Forest Service manage (or mismanage) natural ones. As for the environmental movement, nearly all environmentalists are effectively Deep Ecologists now, whether or not they own up publicly to the fact. (Deep Ecologists believe that the human species ought to be regarded as simply one of many inhabiting the planet, not ordained by God, human consciousness, or intellect to its "privileged" position on earth.) Environmentalists and statists have functioned as an effective *dirigiste* coalition for several generations now, more than long enough to make their ultimate destination plain.

Paranoids (like me), who suspect that the envisioned goal is to remove the existing rural population from the land, pen it up in megalopoli and give it some "meaningful" (meaning harmless and, probably, useless) occupation to pursue in an urban setting, strictly limit citizens' access to "protected land" (that is, all of it, except what hasn't been paved over with asphalt by then), and devote what isn't required for food production by the state to the recovery of "pristine" wilderness and the welfare of endangered species, probably aren't far off the mark. In fact, they're likely dead on it. The scenario is a perfect fit: By the time it could be realized, the population of the United States might easily have reached, say, a billion and a half, thanks to Washington's Romanesque immigration policies. The population explosion would encourage more extensive (and intensive) regulation of people and resources, with results gratifying to Greens and bureaucrats alike—if the human population could be forcibly removed from rapine contact with nature, tamed (no more guns, no more pioneer hardiness, no more rugged self-sufficiency), and reeducated to join the ranks of the mall-rat proletariat that an advanced but increasingly fearful technocommercial tyranny desires and demands.

Back to that *USA Today* election map again: Blue America (nihilistic, abstracted, socialistic, urban, decadent and dependent, feminized and effeminized, helpless, clueless, soft, and defenseless) deeply fears Red America (religious, realistic, capitalist, rural and small town, decadent to some extent but conscious to some degree of that fact, independent, manly and womanly still, self-reliant, relatively aware, with some muscle left, and ARMED). As well it should. The reddest of Red America—the Rocky Mountain West—has understood for some time that Blue America not only threatens its property and livelihood but challenges its social reality and its metaphysical concept of the world.

I recall a conversation I had some years ago in a sports bar in Douglas, Arizona, across the street from the old Gadsden Hotel where Pancho Villa once ate, with a horse trainer working at the Douglas track. Armando was a slightly built but wiry man of about my age, sharply dressed in a red silk shirt, cowboy boots, tight blue jeans cinched in with a belt of silver conchos, and a stiff, new hat circled by a snakeskin band. He looked Mexican; actually, he'd been born down there but as a young man crossed to the St where he was drafted into the U.S. A and packed off to Vietnam. In the Ar what impressed him most was the st gering naivete of the upper-middle-cl American draftees taken straight fr college or graduate school and thrust u ceremoniously into an environme where survival depended upon physic skills and experience. "They didn't kno not to grab hold of a running rope," A mando said, wonderingly. "They neve fired a gun in their lives before. The didn't know you don't back a guy with knife into a corner." He shook his hea pityingly, and drank his beer. "The were always the ones to be killed first," h finished. "I saw it happen time after time after time."

Environmentalists and their bureaucratic allies in Washington are engaged in the dangerous work of backing people with guns into corners, unaware of the danger they put themselves in thereby. I they're as smart as they think they are they won't go through with it. Rather than lock up more land in national monuments and parks, shut down mining, obstruct drilling, halt timber sales, bankrupt ranchers, and create "wildernesses" that, in the circumstances of modern-day America, can only be expensive artifices—natural Disneylands where you can't buy cotton candy or shoot waterpistols—they will . . . shut off immigration and shut it off but good—*for* good. No more talk from the Sierra Club about how we can enjoy continued high levels of immigration *and* zero population growth *if* the natives start having fewer babies. If the ruling class isn't willing to do that much, then forget it! Pave over Yellowstone, fill the Grand Canyon up with L.A.'s garbage, kill off every endangered species before it multiplies and becomes an even bigger political headache than it was before. Without a stop to immigration, everything environmentalists value is *finito*, dead, *caput*. Why should anyone be willing to make the other sacrifices necessary to preserve it?

If these people are smart, they won't push the West to the point where we have to make a choice between freedom and preservation, or even conservation. As human beings, we cannot allow ourselves to become slaves to nature, much less enslaved to other human beings for nature's sake, or in the name of nature. We just can't do it, and we *won't*.

c

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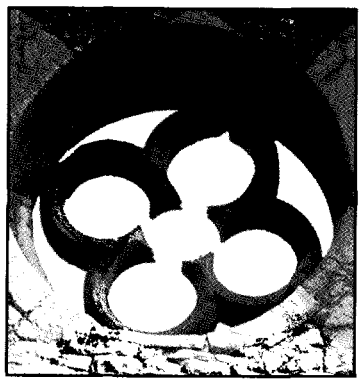

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